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THE WORKS

THEOLOGICAL, MEDICAL, POLITICAL, AND MISCELLANEOUS,

OF

JOHN JEBB, M.D. F.R.S.

WITH

MEMOIRS

OF THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR;

BY JOHN DISNEY, D.D. F.S.A.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CELLANEOUS PAPERS.

I.

JULY 6, 1771.

NG the many efforts which have de in ſupport of religious liberty, rs upon the ſubject, I have ſeldom h any, who place it upon a better on, than the author of a pamphlet ıbliſhed, entitled, " Thoughts on les of religion, with reſpect to their utility to the ſtate."* Syſtemati- ſſions of faith muſt indeed be of the al conſequence to every ſociety, ; perſuaded to adopt them; they immediate tendency to introduce and

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MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

I.

JULY 6, 1771.

AMONG the many efforts which have been made in ſupport of religious liberty, by writers upon the ſubject, I have ſeldom met with any, who place it upon a better foundation, than the author of a pamphlet lately publiſhed, entitled, "Thoughts on our articles of religion, with reſpect to their ſuppoſed utility to the ſtate."* Syſtematical confeſſions of faith muſt indeed be of the moſt fatal conſequence to every ſociety, which is perſuaded to adopt them; they have an immediate tendency to introduce and

[* This tract was written by the rev. Chriſtopher Wyvill, LL.B. rector of Black-Notley, in Eſſex. The third edition, "corrected and enlarged," was publiſhed 1773.]

and to confirm mutual diſtruſt, hypocriſy, and that intolerant ſpirit, which prevails, more or leſs, in every ſociety on earth. Nor have they, from the firſt conception of them to the preſent hour, in which they ſo triumphantly bear ſway, been productive of a ſingle advantage to thoſe numerous ſtates which have lent them their ſupport.

It is readily allowed, that the power of the magiſtrate can only reſtrain the outward action. Religion reaches to the heart, and regulates the ſprings which move the whole machine; but then it muſt be left to each individual, as much as poſſible, to chuſe his own. What is forced upon us, by fear of evil; what we are induced to profeſs, through hope of a reward, can never operate with due force in reſtraining thoſe paſſions which are moſt unfriendly to human happineſs.

I am afraid, ſuch an unbounded liberty of conſcience, as I am pleading for, will meet with few ſupporters. I muſt own, I would have the magiſtrate a perfect Gallio in religious diſputations; for, by acting on the plan of that ſenſible and able governor, he would ſhew himſelf religion's trueſt friend.

But

But, if the motives of fear and hope muſt ſtill be applied by the magiſtrate, in religious caſes, in a cauſe wherein God and a man's own heart are alone concerned, let it be his wiſdom to enforce by penalties, to ſecure by rewards, the prevalence of thoſe doctrines, which have the moſt immediate effect upon the deportment of men, as members of a civilized ſtate; ſuch, for inſtance, as the doctrine of an over-ruling providence, a future ſtate, the happineſs of the virtuous, the miſeries which will hereafter prove the inevitable conſequences of vice. Theſe chriſtianity inculcates, theſe alone it urges, as due conſiderations and incitements to the practice of all ſocial duties; for, as ſocial happineſs ſhould be the end and aim of all religion, ſo, moſt unqueſtionably, the proſpect of promoting it, alone can juſtify the magiſtrate in giving, to any form of worſhip, the ſanction of his power.

Let the religion of Jeſus, then, be the religion of the engliſh nation; not that ſpurious form of it, which has hitherto appeared in human eſtabliſhments and ſyſtematic articles of faith, but ſuch as ſhines with pureſt

luſtre in the goſpel. The religion of the goſpel is moſt true, and therefore it ſhould be the care of individuals to inquire into its evidence, to form a proper eſtimate of the importance of its ſterling worth, and to regulate their lives and converſations by an unlimited obedience to its commands. The religion of the goſpel is moſt uſeful to the community, and therefore the religion of the goſpel, untainted by the mixture of human errors, unreſtrained by the power of a deſpotic hierarchy, ſhould be the religion of the ſtate.

A WHIG.

II.

OCTOBER 5, 1771.

THE author of "The religious eſtabliſhment in Scotland, examined upon proteſtant principles," * has, in delineating the manners

[* This maſterly work, (p. 157—160) which has been ſtiled "the Scots' confeſſional," was publiſhed in octavo in 1771; and was occaſioned by the then late proſecution againſt the rev. Alexander Ferguſon, miniſter of Kil-

ners of the kirk, in fact, ſo juſtly deſcribed the ſpirit of her ſiſter church, that I cannot reſiſt the inclination which I feel of ſending you the character of the church of England, thus painted in the ſcottiſh writer's words.

" I ſay that, by impoſing a particular ſubſcription to an human ſtandard, we have departed from the proteſtant foundation; and that the introduction of the thirty-nine articles has taken away the diſtinction between the churches of England and of Rome. For what is this diſtinction; and on what is it founded? Was it not founded on this principle, that the church of Rome, by requiring implicit ſubmiſſion to her deciſions, had raiſed them to a level with the ſcriptures? And what has the church of England, in effect, done leſs? She denies indeed, in words, that ſhe conſiders her confeſſion as of equal authority with the ſcrip-

Kilwinning in Scotland. And, in 1775, the ſame author publiſhed a ſmall tract entitled " Subſcription to human articles of faith, examined particularly, in a letter to the rev. Thomas Walker, miniſter of Dundonald" in the ſame kingdom.]

tures; yet ſhe impoſes it upon her members, as if it was. She acknowledges that ſhe is liable to error, and may have erred; yet ſhe inſiſts upon it, that, in fact, ſhe has not erred; and we find the conſequences the ſame to us, as if ſhe openly aſſerted her own infallibility. The church of Rome, maintains that her deciſions are juſt, becauſe the authority which iſſues them is infallible; ſhe has not erred, becauſe ſhe cannot err. The church of England acknowledges her fallibility, and, at the ſame time, aſſerts her actual rectitude. She hardily inſiſts upon it, that ſhe is right in every point, while, with the ſame breath, ſhe acknowledges ſhe may be wrong in all. Which of the two churches is moſt conſiſtent? I may aſk, which of them is moſt honeſt; the one, who acts the deed and avows the principle; or, the one, who acts the ſame deed and diſowns it? You deny that you put your articles on the ſame footing with the ſcriptures; but tell me, what it is you require to the ſcriptures, which you do not require to your articles? You require us to believe all your opinions. What does the church of Rome do more?

But

But we burn no heretics; heretics would, no doubt, be obliged to your humanity, if the difference, between burning and ſtarving, were a difference of much conſequence. It is not you, however, whom we have to thank, even for this favour; your range is limited by the civil power; what you can, you do. You brand with infamy whoever preſumes to differ from yourſelves, you deprive him of his emoluments, and enforce him to pine in poverty. The church of Rome commits him to the flames, and puts an end to his miſery."

The foregoing imperfect extract may convince our half-proteſtant timid brethren, who wiſh for reformation, but are afraid to aſſert their rights, that the church of England in her ſixth article, inſtead of ſhewing any favourable indulgence to her ſcrupulous ſons, in fact, only evinces her own inconſiſtency.

LÆLIUS.

III.

NOVEMBER 16, 1771.

IT is an unqueſtionable fact, that ever ſince the memorable æra from whence we date the diſtinction between the clerical and the lay profeſſors of the goſpel, the former have always claimed an excluſive right to moderate in every queſtion of a religious nature; they have been ever uniformly active in aſſerting this right; and a celebrated converſation, between a member of parliament and an archbiſhop of our church, at the time when our preſent articles were firſt eſtabliſhed by law, affords a melancholy inſtance how deeply the idea of church authority, can be rooted in the breaſt even of a proteſtant divine.* The exemplary piety, however, and fervent zeal which ſhone forth in the deportment of the clergy, in the ages imme-

[*See vol. i. p. 165, where this converſation between Mr. Peter Wentworth, and archbiſhop Parker, is cited from D'Ewes's Journal. But the reader may alſo be referred

immediately ſucceeding to the reformation, appeared deſerving of that indulgence, with which they were treated by the crown; the ſerious and well-diſpoſed, of every rank, connived at their encroachments, even upon the primary rights of men, while they beheld them employing their powers in promoting the knowledge of the goſpel, in recommending the practice of every public and private virtue. The right of our church governors to moderate in every religious queſtion, is ſtill moſt ſtrenuouſly aſſerted; the manner in which it has, of late, been exerciſed, let others tell.

It is my preſent purpoſe to point out a caſe wherein not only a manifeſt inconſiſtency appears, between their conduct and pretenſions, but wherein alſo they are ſurely guilty of a very culpable neglect.

It now is known, to almoſt every man in the kingdom, that a cauſe of great importance relating to the church, will be propoſed to the

ferred to Burn's "Eccleſiaſtical Law," under the word "Article;" and to the "Confeſſional," pref. to 2d edit. p. vii.—xiv. note (d) where he will find ſome good arguments in reſpect to the inferences from, and conſequences of this ever memorable converſation.]

the conſideration of the legiſlature in the enſuing ſeſſions; a cauſe, in which it will be criminal in every clergyman, on whatever ſide he inliſts himſelf, not to take an animated part. It will be propoſed, in the great council of the nation, that thoſe articles on which the very exiſtence of the church, though erroneouſly, has been ſuppoſed to depend, ſhould be left without other ſupport, than their own intrinſic excellence will gain them. Yet, as if unconſcious of the duties annexed to their ſtation, the biſhops of the church of England ſit torpid and inactive. I am not one of thoſe who think it neceſſary, that they ſhould immediately take a decided part; I think ſuch conduct would be indecent in their circumſtances; as lords of parliament, they will hereafter probably be called upon to give their judgment; but, as paſtors of the church, the plain, the honeſt path lies open to them. If ſtrong conviction does not already occupy each thought, let them employ every moment in examining into the nature of a cauſe, which, however it be decided, muſt prove of high importance both to the community, and the church,

in

in which they have, by the civil power, been appointed overſeers. The time of a deciſive action is now approaching; the eyes of all mankind will be fixed upon their conduct. It will be expected, that they call upon every rank and order of their profeſſion, to give their ſolemn attention to the intereſting debate. It will be expected, that they remove the terrors of inquiſitional reſentment from the eyes and ears of every doubting brother; that, at the ſame time that they exhort to moderation and candour, in the diſcuſſion of this queſtion, they alſo call, with loudeſt voice, for the free uninfluenced voices of their clergy. It will be expected that you, my lords, will, at length, unfold thoſe recondite reaſons, which have induced you ſo long to look with cold diſdain on every effort to reform. The cauſe of genuine proteſtantiſm has been long before you. You have refuſed to hear it. You have looked, with pleaſure, on the encroachments of its formidable foe. The appeal, at length, is made to a more juſt tribunal, to a far more equitable judge. A britiſh parliament ſhall decide upon the juſtice

tice of our claims. The time is approaching, when the cauſe of the much-injured Clayton ſhall again be heard. The mild and gentle ſpirit of the "Candid diſquiſitions," ſhall no longer pour out its plaintive ſorrows to an inattentive age; nor the bold and manly genius of the matchleſs "Confeſſional," utter forth his warning voice in vain. The ghoſt of the "Alliance" ſhall ſhrink into itſelf; the heroes of a ſecond reformation ſhall ariſe; nor ſhall the mercenary legions, raiſed by ——, led on by —— and ——, be able to withſtand them.

LÆLIUS.

IV.

NOVEMBER 1771.*

IN every propoſal wherein the public is concerned, and to the conſideration of which their

[* This paper was adopted by the members of the aſſociation at the Feathers tavern, and by them very generally diſtributed. Hence it has been called their "Circular letter." It was afterwards reprinted in the public prints, and many of the periodical publications of that time.]

their attention is deſired, they have an undoubted claim to a full and circumſtantial information, with reſpect to the deſign itſelf, and the meaſures whereby the promoters of it mean to effect their purpoſe.

It is now pretty generally known, that a ſcheme has been ſome months in agitation, to petition parliament for relief in the matter of ſubſcription to the thirty-nine articles and liturgy of the church of England; and that meetings have been held in London, to conſult upon the methods of obtaining ſuch relief.

Upon the firſt general meeting at the Feathers tavern, in the Strand, on the 17th of laſt July, it was agreed that the following bond of aſſociation ſhould be ſigned by the perſons there preſent.

"We, whoſe names are hereunto ſubſcribed, do profeſs that the intent of our preſent meeting is to obtain redreſs in the matter of ſubſcription to the liturgy and thirty-nine articles of the church of England; and that we purpoſe, by every legal and juſt method, to promote the ſaid end."

This declaration was accordingly ſubſcribed

ſcribed by ſeveral gentlemen of the three profeſſions of divinity, civil law, and phyſic; and, immediately after, the following reſolutions were unanimouſly agreed to.

Firſt. That the method of petitioning parliament, is judged a legal and juſt method of promoting the aforementioned end.

Secondly. That a committee of eleven gentlemen, (then named,) be appointed to draw up a petition, in order to be ſubmitted to the ſenſe of the next general meeting.

Thirdly. That the 25th of September next, be appointed for a ſecond general meeting, to conſider the petition which ſhall then be preſented to them by the ſaid committee.

At this ſecond general meeting, the petition, which had been previouſly prepared by the committee, was twice read, unanimouſly approved of, and immediately ſigned by the gentlemen then preſent.

The aſſociated members are ſenſible that the publication of this petition would be the moſt natural and ſatisfactory method of acquainting the public, with the nature and whole extent of their purpoſe; but they are reſtrained

reſtrained from giving this proof of the candour and moderation of their proceedings, by the conſideration of the impropriety and indecency, which would attend the publication of ſuch petition, previous to its preſentment to that honourable houſe, from which they ſolicit relief.

The following ſummary view, however, of their plan and intentions, is ſubmitted to the conſideration of every friend to religious liberty and the goſpel.

It is well known that, previous to ordination and admiſſion to eccleſiaſtical preferments, ſubſcription to ſome, or all the thirty-nine articles of religion, as well as to the liturgy, is inſiſted on by various acts of parliament, and canons of the church.

It is alſo well known, that ſuch ſubſcription is required previous to admiſſion to every degree in the univerſities of Cambridge and Oxford. In the latter of which, it is required, even at the time of firſt admiſſion, or matriculation. Reſtraints, which experience has ſhewn to be unneceſſary by the example of the univerſity of Dublin, wherein they are abſolutely unknown.

It is the intention of the petitioners, to ſolicit relief in the matter of ſubſcription to the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, for the following reaſons.

Firſt. Becauſe they apprehend, that the liberty of judging for themſelves, with reſpect to the ſenſe of ſcripture, is one of thoſe poſſeſſions which they have a right to enjoy, as members of a proteſtant ſtate; a poſſeſſion, which the firſt and moſt venerable of our reformers claimed as the unalienable property of chriſtians, in oppoſition to the tyranny and bigotry of Rome; a privilege, which cannot with juſtice, be circumſcribed by any juriſdiction upon earth, by whatever names ſuch juriſdiction is diſtinguiſhed, or defined.

Secondly. Becauſe they are in their conſciences perſuaded, that the requiſition of ſuch ſubſcription very powerfully obſtructs the right underſtanding and progreſs of the goſpel, by impoſing upon more improved times, the doctrines of dark and ignorant ages, as the genuine declarations of holy writ; by elevating the opinions and commandments of fallible men, to an equality of

of honour and authority with the word of the infallible God; by ſubjecting the profeſſors of chriſtianity to the charge of inſincerity and prevarication, in ſubſcribing or declaring their unfeigned aſſent to propoſitions, which are expreſſed in abſtruſe and unſcriptural terms; by deriving upon the moſt zealous friends of religion, the reproaches of intolerant and bigotted brethren; by ſubjecting the holy doctrines of their maſter to the ſcorn and deriſion of unbelieving and profligate men; and, at the ſame time, precluding the uſe of thoſe arguments from ſacred writ, whereby the enemies of revelation might be effectually ſilenced; by depriving the church of many valuable members, who, on account of her exerting an authority in matters of faith, have thought themſelves under a neceſſity of departing from her communion; by producing unhappy diviſions in her boſom, diviſions hurtful to the intereſts of chriſtianity, deſtructive of that piety and ſtrict morality which is recommended in the goſpel, and therefore pernicious, and even dangerous, to the ſtate.

Thirdly. Becauſe all the ſecurity which the ſtate can reaſonably require, is already provided by the oaths of ſupremacy and allegiance. And all the ſecurity which a proteſtant church can conſiſtently demand, is provided by many declarations of attachment to the cauſe of chriſtianity as contained in the ſcriptures; whereby all danger which might be apprehended to our excellent conſtitution, and the intereſts of that holy religion which is eſtabliſhed in our land, from the encroachments of the papal power, is effectually and intirely removed. At the ſame time, the petitioners are willing to afford any further proof of their abhorrence of the antichriſtian power and ſpirit of popery, which the legiſlature ſhall think proper to require.

With reſpect to ſubſcription to the liturgy, we cannot but lament, that the legiſlature ſhould think proper to continue the requiſition of a ſubſcribed approbation of a form of worſhip, the uſe of which is eſtabliſhed by penalties, which muſt ſufficiently enſure the obedience of the parties concerned. Penalties, and not ſubſcriptions and declara-

declarations, ſurely conſtitute the proper ſanctions of law.

It is, therefore, the intention of the petitioners to ſolicit relief in the matter of ſubſcription to the liturgy alſo of the church of England.

Firſt. Becauſe ſuch ſubſcription not only implies an aſſent to thoſe doctrines, which are ſaid to be contained in the forms of public worſhip, and, therefore, is liable to the ſame objections, as ſubſcription to the articles themſelves; but, is attended with the additional inconveniences that ariſe from ſuch doctrines being more obſcurely and indeterminately declared.

Secondly. Becauſe ſuch requiſition of ſubſcription muſt eventually preclude all improvement in a liturgy, which, however excellent in the main deſign, has been proved to be defective and reprehenſible in many of its parts; inaſmuch as it ſubjects to the charge of inconſiſtency, thoſe perſons who may, at any time, propoſe an amendment in the forms of public worſhip, to the full approbation of which, it may be urged, they have with all ſolemnity ſubſcribed.

Parliamentary redreſs is preferred to the mode of obtaining relief in convocation;

Becauſe, it is apprehended, that ſubſcription being injoined by law, it is not in the power, nor does it fall within the province of the biſhops and clergy, aſſembled in convocation, to afford that effectual relief to the petitioners, which is the object of their ſuit, more eſpecially as the grievance complained of affects not the clergy only, but the two profeſſions of civil law and phyſic, as well as others of the laity; the diſcharge of whoſe functions ſeems to be wholly exempt from the controul of, and altogether unconnected with, every kind of eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction.

It may be demanded of us, to aſſign our reaſons for petitioning for redreſs at this particular period; and, it may be objected that we ſhould reſpectfully wait for the interpoſition, or requeſt the concurrence of, our ſuperiors in the church. It is anſwered, that as the grievances we complain of, are peculiarly our own, ſo they have been acknowledged and proclaimed, long before the commencement of the preſent diſſenſions in the

ſtate:

ſtate: and that the promoters of this attempt to remove them, diſclaim all other reaſons and motives for coming forth in ſupport of this cauſe, which do not immediately ariſe from a ſenſe of duty; and which would not, upon the ſtricteſt examination, appear deſerving of approbation. Conſcious of the purity of their intentions, they court the countenance of no party whatſoever; they intreat, and ſhall joyfully accept, the aſſiſtance of every honeſt and liberal-minded man.

After ſuch an avowal, we may be allowed ſtill further to obſerve, that the time when a grievance is felt and complained of, is always the proper time for proteſtants and engliſhmen to petition for its removal; that the petition in queſtion muſt ſupport itſelf, not by the dignity or number of the perſons who prefer it, but by the intrinſic juſtice and moderation of its claims; and, that there is a perpetual obligation upon the legiſlature, in every well conſtituted ſtate, to attend to, and redreſs, the religious grievances of the ſubject, although ſuch remonſtrance ſhould proceed from the meaneſt of the people. With reſpect to the conduct of our ec-

cleſiaſtical ſuperiors, the petitioners have obſerved a moſt reſpectful ſilence: ſolicitous only to approve themſelves the faithful ſervants of God, by a diſcharge of their own duty, in their petition they preſume neither to cenſure, nor commend. Yet, if reprehended for officiouſneſs, in ſtepping forth from their obſcurity, by aſſuming the character of petitioners, inſtead of acquieſcing, with a dutiful ſubmiſſion, to what the wiſdom of their ſuperiors has thought reaſonable and juſt; they muſt, at length, be obliged to confeſs, that the requeſted relaxation and indulgence, would indeed have been recommended to the legiſlature, with peculiar propriety, from the bench. And, it may be further allowed to the zeal of perſons, whoſe hearts are warmed by an affectionate concern for the true intereſts of religion, to declare, that after ſo many juſt, ſo many affecting remonſtrances from the preſs, it was but reaſonable to expect, that the biſhops of the church of England would have, long ſince, taken the lead, in this truly proteſtant ſcheme. But, the time of all reaſonable acquieſcence being expired, it is now become the duty of

every

every friend to chriſtian liberty, each according to his abilty, to be active in a cauſe wherein the advancement of the goſpel, and the honour of his maſter, are ſo immediately and eſſentially concerned.

V.

NOVEMBER 30, 1771.

TO THE REV. THE VICE-CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.*

SIR,

I REALLY reſpect your character, and think, that, if left to the natural ſuggeſtions of your own mind, you would, upon the approaching occaſion, act an upright part. This perſuaſion is my encouragement for the preſent addreſs; in which I call upon you, as bound by the oaths of office, to act in a cauſe of ſome conſequence, agreeably to the ſtatutes, and approved cuſtoms of the place. The members of the late caput have

[* Dr. Brown, Maſter of Pembroke-hall.]

ſet you an unprecedented example, in ſtifling a motion formally propoſed by one of the moſt reſpectable characters in Cambridge; * becauſe they were apprehenſive that the generality of the univerſity was favourably inclined to it. You may remember the indignation of the ſenate, upon the occaſion; the public beheld the tranſaction with aſtoniſhment. I urge not this with a view to intimidate. The gentleman, whom I am addreſſing, is above being influenced by any unmanly apprehenſions; I mention it only as an inducement to conſider, and to reflect. If you conſult the dictates of your own heart, you cannot be miſtaken. Reſign not, out of deference to a ſet of men, who are unworthy of your confidence, the authority of a judgment truly qualified to lead. Let the cauſe of the perſons, who may be affected by the fate of this motion, fairly be brought before the proper tribunal. If the meaſure in queſtion be unreaſonable, the ſenate of Cambridge will reject it of themſelves. We are not all of us ignorant of the ſtatutes and cuſtoms of the univerſity. Many of

[* Mr. Tyrwhitt.]

of us, on account of our offices and employments, are the moſt proper judges in the caſe. The ſenate of Cambridge hath eſtabliſhed ſubſcriptions in ſome caſes. The ſenate of Cambridge are properly qualified to judge, concerning the expediency of repealing them. I will further add, that your friend, the late worthy profeſſor of divinity, while tutor of St. John's, thought it incumbent upon him to give a courſe of lectures on thoſe articles which are annually ſubſcribed. If the preſent motion be rejected, it will ſurely become the duty of the diſſentients to take care that the thirty-nine articles themſelves be, at leaſt, once ſolemnly read over to the candidates for the bachelor's degree, previous to ſubſcription. A regular lecture upon them, in each college, would not be indecent. But it may be too much, in theſe times, to expect an imitation of profeſſor Rutherforth's example.

A MEMBER OF THE SENATE.

VI. De-

VI.

DECEMBER 28, 1771.

TO THE REVEREND —— ——.

SIR,

I OWN the arguments you pleaded, during the courſe of our converſation, laſt monday evening, in excuſe for your not ſigning the clerical petition, though they did not convince my reaſon, affected my heart. You ſeemed, Sir, to be under the ſtrongeſt perſuaſion, that the grievance of ſubſcription was, as it has been always eſteemed by thoughtful men, indeed inſupportable. You will do me the juſtice to own, that you thought ſo, not in conſequence of any repreſentation or high colouring of mine, but was led to form ſuch conception of them, from your own feelings and conſummate knowledge of the ſcriptures, the obvious ſenſe of which, they ſo miſerably pervert. You read the petition with attention. I ſaw the movements of your inmoſt ſoul, upon the occaſion. You confirmed, by the inflexions of

of your voice, the truth and importance of the matter contained in the petition, more than by the ſubſcription of a thouſand hands. Yet you begged time to deliberate upon the addition of your ſignature. You had others to conſult. The conſequence was, as I expected; you refuſed to ſign. You objected, the times were unfriendly to reformation, and the danger of impeding its progreſs, when happier conjunctures ſhould ariſe, by an immature and precipitate attempt. Objections which, though urged with the uſual eloquence of my friend, I ſoon perceived had not the leaſt ſhare in the determination of his will. At length, you threw off the unbecoming reſerve; you owned to me the truth. You owned, that the apprehenſions of loſing the living of ——, which you have ſo much reaſon to expect; of forfeiting the favour of your patron; and the terrors of an excommunication, threatened to be fulminated by your dioceſan at your defenceleſs head, had damped the riſing flame of public virtue, had extinguiſhed the generous ardour of appearing in the ſupport of ſacred truth. You urged the ſmall acceſſion of advantage from

a ſingle

a ſingle name, and, thereby, in terms the moſt diſgraceful, acknowledged your own inſignificance. You pleaded the apprehenſion of loſing preferment; and, by your plea, you virtually diſavowed your relation to that maſter, who calls upon you to leave whatever men hold dear, for the ſake of his goſpel. You repreſented the danger of forfeiting the favour of an earthly patron, by bearing your teſtimony to the truth; not conſidering, that by your acknowledged prevarication, you forfeited the favour of your father which is in heaven. You deſcribed, in pompous ſtile, the terrors of an eccleſiaſtical excommunication, when, at the ſame time, you knew, that by the better temper of the times, that celebrated engine of church deſpotiſm, if unaided by the ſecular power, was reduced to a mere "brutum fulmen." Indeed, I could ſcarcely believe, that it was poſſible for an engliſh prelate to have acted as you deſcribe, but as you aſſert the fact, I am conſtrained to believe it. I hope you will permit me to give the name, which indeed I ſhrewdly gueſs at, to a much injured and abuſed nation.

You

You are much miſtaken if you imagine, that I write this letter with any hopes of working an alteration in your ſentiments; I have no ſuch expectation, nor would I, as a friend to the petition, wiſh for the addition of a ſingle hand, which was not accompanied with the heart. The gentlemen engaged, in this beſt of cauſes, are truly volunteers, yet they affect not the praiſe of more than ordinary virtue; they are ſupported by the animating proſpect of ſucceſs; on every ſide they hear the applauſes of the juſt, the generous, the good. Their cauſe will be introduced into parliament, aided by the ſuffrages of every friend to public virtue. They know they have an approving people; they truſt they have an approving God.

LÆLIUS.

VII. JA-

VII.

AN ANSWER TO A REFUTATION, &c. PART THE FIRST.

JANUARY 3, 1772.*

RELYING upon the impartiality of the public, I ſhall endeavour to anſwer the objections of an adverſary to a late "circular letter," which delineates the intended ſcheme of petitioning parliament for relief in the matter of ſubſcription.

The author of "the refutation" begins with aſcribing the drawing up of the petition to parliament, to "ſome warm admirers

[* This, and the following letter, ſigned "Collatinus," were written in reply to two others, which had appeared in December 1771, in anſwer to the foregoing "circular letter." (See p. 12, of this volume.) The writer, who ſigned himſelf "No bigot to, nor againſt the church of England," was generally underſtood to be a clergyman, beneficed in Norfolk. In January 1772, he republiſhed theſe letters in a tract, entitled, "A full refutation of the reaſons advanced in defence of the petition, which is intended to be offered to parliament by ſome of the clergy, for the abolition of ſubſcription to the articles and liturgy." He added, at the ſame time, a ſhort appendix, in the way of a rejoinder to Collatinus.]

mirers of that flippant work the Confeſſional." I will beg leave to aſk him how he comes to be ſo well informed. Some ſuppoſed emiſſaries of the biſhops have indeed, at ſundry times, endeavoured to gain admiſſion at the Feathers. But their diſhoneſt efforts have hitherto been conſtantly defeated.

It was rather impolitic in the refuter, to bring his own good ſenſe and taſte in queſtion, at the very beginning of his laboured performance, by impoſing an epithet upon the Confeſſional, the propriety of which will never be acknowledged by any other perſon, who has read that incomparable work. A work which derives as much honour on the engliſh nation, as the amiable life and converſation of its author does on his profeſſion, and on human nature.

In the ſecond paragraph of his refutation, he obſerves, that the firſt reaſon of the petitioners for aboliſhing the thirty-nine articles is " that the liberty of judging for themſelves with reſpect to the ſenſe of ſcripture is circumſcribed by ſubſcription."

A quo-

A quotation evidently invidious and unfair. I will put the queſtion to himſelf. Is it manly, is it generous, thus to endeavour to fix the imputation of intolerance upon the promoters of this truly proteſtant deſign? They mean not, they wiſh not to "aboliſh" the thirty-nine articles of the church. They only intreat that they may not be ſubjected to the alternative of ſubſcribing them, or of loſing their preferments. And were this juſt and moderate petition granted, no advocate for the doctrines contained in them, would, in conſequence of ſuch indulgence, be likely to ſuffer in his perſon, his fortune, or his fame. But to the argument.

The liberty of judgment which this writer ſays is not prevented, but preſuppoſed in the act of ſubſcription, has ſomething very peculiar and uncommon in its compoſition. It is a liberty, which the ſtorms and tempeſts of perſecution have often violently aſſailed, and have aſſailed in vain; when, at the ſame time, it has not been able to withſtand the ſofter allurements and blandiſhments of the tempter's art. Undoubtedly ſuch incumbrances and reſtrictions ſhould not be thrown

thrown in the way of a public teacher of the goſpel, which expoſe him to the leaſt unneceſſary temptation of prevaricating with his God. The man that forces me by fear of death, or dureſſe of impriſonment, to reſign my liberty of action; and he who endeavours to engage me in the ſupport of his unworthy purpoſes, by taking every unfair advantage, which my youth or ignorance ſupplies him with, or holding forth the ſplendid offers of riches, pomp and power in order to ſeduce me; exerciſes an equally unjuſtifiable dominion over my will, equally obſtructs the exerciſe of private judgment. I offer this not as an excuſe for the conduct of my aſſociates. Very many of them, I am perſuaded, have conſcientiouſly ſubſcribed the articles, and can conſcientiouſly alſo reiterate their ſubſcription. More diſintereſted, more generous in their purpoſe, they mourn and feel for others. I own, I find the ſenſations of conjugal and paternal love, oppoſed to the ſenſe of duty, and therefore feel alſo for myſelf. If the refuter likes this conceſſion, let him enjoy it; but he will triumph at the expence of his humanity.

An objection lies againſt the requiſition of ſubſcription, in the words of the memorialiſts, "becauſe it impoſes upon more improved times, the doctrines of dark and ignorant ages, as the genuine declarations of holy writ." The author of the refutation is offended with this, becauſe he imagines the preſent age is in a ſtate of retrogradation, not of improvement. The teſtimony of biſhop Law, in his "Theory of religion," ſupported by facts, will, I truſt, be of more force than the refuter's aſſertion. The knowledge and ratiocination of the former times, in theological ſubjects at leaſt, and particularly of the celebrated compilers of our articles, may, unluckily for the refuter, be appealed to for the deciſion of this debate. Let the reader conſult ſome ſpecimens of the learning, and other qualifications, of our principal reformers, for drawing up articles of theology, contained in a book entitled, "Free thoughts on the ſubject of a further reformation of the church of England," and publiſhed by the rev. Dr. Benjamin Dawſon.

With reſpect to the refuter's fourth paragraph, I ſhall only obſerve, that thoſe laws cer-

certainly " elevate the opinions and commandments of fallible men, to an equality of honour and authority with the word of the infallible God," which eſtabliſh the profeſſion of both by equal ſanctions, and lay the impugners of both, under equal diſabilites. Let the church diſavow her tyranny as much as ſhe thinks proper. Facts are obſtinate, and of more avail than words. Are not the required declarations of aſſent to the articles, as being, " all and every of them agreeable to the word of God," equally ſtrong, I may ſay ſtronger than thoſe declarations, wherein we acknowledge the divine authority of the holy ſcriptures themſelves? And, is not the ſtatute of the firſt of William and Mary equally ſevere, againſt the impugners of the idolatrous doctrines of Athanaſius, and the blaſphemers of the divine majeſty itſelf?

The fifth paragraph, in the refuter's letter, is much of the ſame ſort with the objection in his ſecond, and may be anſwered in the ſame manner. With reſpect to oaths, his parallel does not hold; and I will beg leave to obſerve to him, though not in the very words of Hudibras, an author ſurely impro-

perly quoted in ſuch an argument as this, that there are circumſtances, in the courſe of human affairs, wherein, they who impoſe an oath, a declaration, or ſubſcription, may be more blameable than thoſe who take them. The univerſities of Cambridge and Oxford, at this preſent moment, afford a melancholy inſtance of the truth of my aſſertion.

The refuter's ſixth paragraph I do not thoroughly underſtand, but it will be ſufficient, if I eſtabliſh the truth of the controverted clauſe. It is ſaid, in the circular letter, that " the requiſition of ſubſcription to the thirty-nine articles derives upon the moſt zealous friends of religion, the reproaches of intolerant and bigotted brethren." To explain this, we will take the caſe of the famous Dr. Samuel Clarke. He had ſubſcribed the thirty-nine articles, he was one of the moſt zealous friends of religion, he ſhewed his zeal by an incomparable publication; it was objected to him, by thoſe who could not object to his book, that he had departed from his ſubſcriptions, and the refuter muſt know that he was in imminent danger of undergoing, if poſſible, ſomething

ſomething ſtill more ſevere, than the reproaches of intolerant and bigotted brethren. The caſe of the worthy biſhop Clayton, is much of the ſame kind.

It is aſſerted in the circular letter, that the requiſition of this ſubſcription "ſubjects the holy doctrines of our maſter to the ſcorn and deriſion of unbelieving and profligate men." The refuter obſerves, that unbelieving and profligate men will ever treat with deriſion the doctrines of Chriſt, whether interpreted in ſermons and in articles, or only given in the words of ſcripture. But, it is the opinion of the memorialiſts, that, the holy doctrines of their maſter, when given in the words of ſcripture, are much leſs liable to ſuch inſult, than when diſguiſed and diſhonoured, by the miſrepreſentations of Athanaſius and his aſſociates.

It is aſſerted alſo, in the circular letter, that "the requiſition of ſubſcription precludes the uſe of thoſe arguments from ſacred writ, whereby the enemies of revelation might be effectually ſilenced." The refuter deſires us to produce theſe arguments. It is rather unfair to call upon us to pro-

duce them, before the laws injoining ſubſcriptions are repealed. We will, however, put the caſe of a perſon who obſerves an adverſary of revelation to take his ſtand upon the thirteenth article of the church; which the ſaid adverſary ſuppoſes to be a ſcripture doctrine, becauſe ſubſcribed as ſuch by a proteſtant divine. He objects to revelation, as inculcating a doctrine ſo manifeſtly contrary to the common ſenſe of mankind. Let the refuter adhere to his ſubſcriptions, and anſwer him, if he can. A perſon, not under the bond of ſubſcription, ſhall allow the abſurdity of the doctrine, but, with reſpect to its being founded in ſcripture, ſhall deny the fact. Whether the adverſary of revelation will not now be effectually ſilenced, may ſoon be decided by any unſubſcribing perſon, who gives the ſmalleſt degree of attention to the original book. The caſe of Cornelius, as deſcribed in the firſt ſix verſes of the tenth chapter of the Acts, may be of ſome aſſiſtance to ſuch an inquirer.

The refuter will pleaſe to obſerve, that the church is not ſaid to be deprived of the aſſiſtance of many valuable members on account

count of her claiming, but on account of her actually exerciſing an authority in matters of faith: exerciſing it in the impoſition of many an unreaſonable, many an inhuman doctrine. Some credit is, however, due to the refuter, for allowing, that the extenſion of ſubſcription to ſo many interpretations of ſcripture, calls loudly for a cool and candid reviſal of the articles and liturgy, from the heads, and other learned members of the church. But, if by the heads of the church, be meant the biſhops, alas, all hopes are vain. Virtue, honour, "decus et tutamen," might once be ſaid to be inſcribed on almoſt every prelate's mitre: but the love of pleaſure, the love of ſway, and of the "dulce lucellum," ſeem now to be too deeply imprinted in almoſt every prelate's breaſt.

That the diviſions in the boſom of the church, occaſioned by ſubſcriptions, "are pernicious, and even dangerous to the ſtate," may be perceived from the evident tendency of the diſcourſes of thoſe divines, of the church of England, who preach up "imputed righteouſneſs," and "juſtification by faith, excluſive of good works;" doctrines,

deſtitute of all foundation, the articles excepted; doctrines, which owe their continuance in exiſtence only to ſubſcriptions; doctrines, unqueſtionably ſubverſive of that ſtrict morality, which is the ſtate's ſureſt ſafeguard and ſupport.

The moſt material of the objections contained in the laſt paragraph, of the refuter's firſt letter, being in ſubſtance much the ſame with the argument contained in the charge of Dr. Randolph, will, in all probability, ſoon receive their "coup de grace," by a more able hand. In the mean time, I would recommend it to the refuter and his friends, to ſecure comfortable lodgings at Rome, as ſoon as poſſible, as a conſiderable number of his brethren are determined, it ſeems, to poſt thither, as ſoon as ever the petition ſhall be attended to by the houſe. A gentleman of the church of England writing as follows, in a letter, which, it is ſaid, has appeared in print; "There are yet ſeven thouſand brethren of our Iſrael who will not bow the knee to their Baal, and who, ſooner than accede to their propoſal, will return to popery again, wherein there are the fundamentals of chriſtianity

tianity retained, though there be much hay and ſtubble included."

Thoſe objections of the refuter, which are contained in his ſecond letter, are reſerved to another opportunity.

COLLATINUS.

VIII.

AN ANSWER TO A REFUTATION, &c. PART THE SECOND.

JANUARY 8, 1772.

THE firſt paragraph, of the Refuter's ſecond part, contains nothing, beſides illiberal reflections upon the underſtandings of his opponents. Such reflections are unworthy of a gentleman and a ſcholar. But we ſhould imitate the example we diſapprove, were we to endeavour to retort them; we ſhall therefore only ſay, that we ſhall leave it to the determination of his better judgment, whether they were not highly unbecoming, when he was treating upon a queſtion ſo ſerious and important as the preſent.

With

With reſpect to the ſecond paragraph, an objection is urged in it againſt the following words of the memorial; "We cannot but lament, that the legiſlature ſhould think proper to continue the requiſition of a ſubſcribed approbation of a form of worſhip, the uſe of which is eſtabliſhed by penalties, which muſt ſufficiently enſure the obedience of the parties concerned. Penalties, and not ſubſcriptions and declarations, ſurely conſtitute the proper ſanctions of law." But ſurely the memorialiſts may be juſtified in their aſſertion. A declaration of aſſent to the uſe of the liturgy, in places of public worſhip, is altogether unneceſſary. Could one indeed ſuppoſe the legiſlature ſhould be ſo abſurd as to ordain the uſe of liturgical forms in our families, or cloſets, a ſubſcribed declaration of our aſſent would not, in that caſe, be improper. Penalties would be inſufficient by reaſon of the difficulty, or rather, impoſſibility of conviction. But when we recollect, that the doors of our churches are open to every perſon, who pleaſes to enter them; that the forms of church worſhip, are in the hands of every perſon in the nation;

tion; that the times of public prayer are ſtated; and, moreover, announced by the ringing of a bell, we cannot but be ſenſible, that any failure in the officiating miniſter muſt be liable to immediate detection. And, therefore, that penalties, in caſe of a departure from the forms of public worſhip, muſt be the only proper ſanctions of a law ordaining their uſe. Theſe penalties are pretty ſevere. They amount to one year's profits of any one preferment, which the king ſhall chooſe, and ſix months impriſonment, for the firſt offence; to the loſs of all preferment, and twelve months impriſonment, for the ſecond; and for the third, to impriſonment for life.

With reſpect to the queſtion of the refuter, is not the legiſlature to make choice of the moſt forcible ſanctions to its laws? It is anſwered, by no means, in a caſe like the preſent. In civil ſociety there is a ſcale of crimes, beginning with thoſe that endanger the very exiſtence of the ſtate, and ending with the leaſt poſſible injury to a ſingle individual. To this ſcale of crimes, a ſcale of puniſhments ſhould be adapted. And, therefore,

fore, as no perſon ſhould ſuffer more than is neceſſary, the legiſlature certainly has not a right, in all inſtances, to make uſe of the moſt forcible ſanctions to its laws. A poſition, which the marquis of Beccaria, and, more particularly, Dr. Blackſtone, in the beginning of the fourth volume of his incomparable Commentaries on the laws of England, has eſtabliſhed by arguments, which do honour both to his underſtanding and his heart. Whether, in the preſent inſtance, the very ſeverity of the penalty would not be a bar to its infliction; and, therefore, whether a declaration of conſent, merely to the uſe of the liturgy, may not be expedient, until the legiſlature ſhall aſſume a milder tone, muſt be left to the wiſdom of abler ſtateſmen, than either the refuter or myſelf.

With reſpect to the refuter's argument concering perjury, I muſt confeſs, I do not thoroughly underſtand it. I remember oaths of allegiance, of ſupremacy, of abjuration, of canonical obedience, but none relating to the uſe of the liturgy. Perjury is an invidious word, and, therefore, by no means ſhould have been uſed. With reſpect to

his

his calling a declaration of aſſent to the uſe of the liturgy, a "divine penalty," the expreſſion might be made, by a willing adverſary, to mean more than the refuter would wiſh.

It was not to be expected, that the refuter would paſs over in ſilence, a plauſible objection, which has often been urged againſt the memorialiſts, viz. that the uſe of the liturgy, in our ſolemn addreſſes to God, is a ſtronger declaration of aſſent to it, than any ſubſcription whatſoever. He has inſiſted upon it at full length, in his fourth paragraph. But, the conſiderate reader will reflect, that the removal of ſubſcription to the liturgy may be a preparatory ſtep to its reviſal; that it is impoſſible for the wit of man to deviſe a liturgy which ſhall, in every part, be agreeable to the ſentiments of all the perſons who are injoined to uſe it, and yet, ſuch liturgy may be approved of upon the whole; that when a removal of ſubſcription to it, is requeſted, the liturgy is not, in that caſe, conſidered as a form of prayer only, but alſo as a formulary of faith, in which light it has certainly been viewed by ſome intolerant

rant divines; and that a petition to remove the ſubſcription of aſſent to it, can never be eſteemed by parliament, as a petition to them, to countenance the mockery of the divine being, but rather as a proof of the petitioners' deſire to offer unto him a more reaſonable ſervice.

It is aſſerted in the memorial, that "ſubſcription to the liturgy not only implies an aſſent to the doctrines, which are ſaid to be contained in it, but is attended with the additional inconveniences that ariſe, from ſuch doctrines being more obſcurely and indeterminately declared." The latter clauſe of this quotation excites the refuter's aſtoniſhment, and if the doctrines which are obſcurely and indeterminately declared in the liturgy, were the ſame with thoſe which are declared in the articles, the expreſſion would excite my aſtoniſhment alſo. But are there not doctrines, ſaid to be contained in the liturgy, over and above thoſe contained in the articles; and may not the want of preciſion, in the ſtating of them, ſubject the ſubſcriber to very formidable inconveniences? The obſcurity of a law, is a dangerous engine of oppreſſion

preſſion in a tyrant's hand. And the fertile head of an interpreter in lawn ſleeves may ſee, or fancy he ſees, intirely a new ſet of articles in our forms of worſhip, if there be the leaſt occaſion given to conſider ſuch forms of worſhip, as a formulary of faith. Perſons who were acquainted with the hiſtory of Lambeth in Secker's time, may ſee a meaning in theſe obſervations, which will eſcape the generality of readers; and perſons acquainted with the hiſtory of Lambeth, ſince the acceſſion of the preſent prelate, may find a parallel in the behaviour of Cornwallis. But to return. A diſtinction may ſurely, very properly, be made in the caſe of the liturgy, between a form of worſhip, and a formulary of faith; and, therefore, if the liturgy has ever been conſidered in the latter light, it becomes the duty of the perſons, who, adhering to the point of the ſufficiency of the ſcriptures, petition againſt the impoſition of human articles and confeſſions of faith, to petition alſo againſt ſubſcription to our liturgical forms. And, the indeterminate manner of the expreſſion, increaſes the objection to ſuch ſubſcription, as it adminiſters

ſters occaſion for innumerable debates. A little conſideration upon the hiſtory of the ſeventeenth article of our church; and upon the controverſy relating to the intermediate ſtate, ſaid to be determined againſt in our common prayer books, will give force to the preceding obſervations.

It is ſaid in the memorial, that "the requiſition of ſubſcription to the forms of worſhip muſt eventually preclude all improvement in a liturgy, which, however excellent in the main deſign, has been proved to be defective and reprehenſible in many of its parts." Whatever exception may be taken to the mode of expreſſion, the fact is certain, the liturgy is reprehenſible in many of its parts; nay, has been proved to be ſo in the "Candid diſquiſitions;" and yet, all improvement has hitherto been ſolicited in vain. If the reaſon alledged, in the memorial, for the neglect of ſuch improvement, be not the true one, it is not unfair, conſidering the refuter's conceſſion with reſpect to the want of ſuch improvement, to requeſt that he will aſſign the reaſons himſelf; the application was certainly made, with all due ſubmiſſion,

to

to that claſs of perſons, which the refuter looks up to with ſuch an exuberance of reſpect. The appeal, however, is now made to a more reſpectable tribunal, to far honeſter men; who, in all probability, will ſhew that they have a zeal for the real intereſts of religion, that ſureſt ſafeguard of the ſtate, as well as an hearty abhorrence and deteſtation of thoſe arts of hypocriſy and deceit, whereby the advocates for church authority ſeek to prolong the exiſtence of ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm, in the midſt of an enlightened and improved people.

Whether it be the intention of the refuter to go through the remaining part of the memorial, cannot be collected from what has hitherto eſcaped him: if "part the third of a refutation, &c." ſhould not appear, it will be preſumed that the refuter's ſentiments, and thoſe of the memorialiſts, with reſpect to the remainder of the paper, are altogether the ſame. And yet, from the high ſtrain of compliment paid to the epiſcopal character, in the refuter's obſervations, we might be led to imagine that the cenſures paſſed in the memorial, upon the preſent heads of our

church, would conſtitute, in his idea, the moſt exceptionable part of the work.

COLLATINUS.

IX.

TO THE REV. DR. POWELL.

JANUARY 25, 1772.

SIR,

THE reprinting of your celebrated commencement ſermon, at this juncture, is judged, by many perſons, to be done with a deſign to conciliate the minds of the undergraduates of Cambridge to ſubſcription; the thought of which, notwithſtanding the ſubtile logic of certain tutors, fills them with diſquietude; or, in other words, this republication is eſteemed an effort to deſpoil the unſuſpecting ſimplicity of youth, of that native honour and integrity, which will hereafter be but ill exchanged for a ſuperior knowledge of the world.

You aſſert, that a ſubſcription in youth, "implies only a general belief of the articles, grounded partly on their own obſervation, and partly on the authority of others."

It

It may be difficult to draw the diſcriminating line in this ſemi-pope propoſition; but even this motley ſpecies of ſubſcription will not ſuit the caſe of the Cambridge queſtioniſts. It is a well known fact, that the generality of the young men have no opportunity even of reading the thirty-nine articles, previouſly to their ſubſcription. Nay, what is more remarkable, not even at the time of ſubſcription itſelf, as the articles ſet at the head of the regiſter's book are not the thirty-nine articles of religion, but the three articles of the thirty-ſixth canon of our church. They are not, therefore, partly to ſubſcribe upon their own obſervation, and partly upon the authority of others; but it is to be feared, that they intirely ſurrender their right of private judgment into the hands of their ſuperiors; and ſhew as implicit a ſubmiſſion to the deciſions of our church, as our anceſtors were wont to do to papal Rome.

I have long deſired to have ſome diſcourſe with you upon the caſe of Mr. H——, who believed, and often ſolemnly aſſerted that, upon conviction, he believed all the

thirty-nine articles of religion: but was, notwithſtanding, refuſed by you a proper teſtimonial of his orthodoxy. How do you reconcile your refuſal of ſuch teſtimonial, with that ſpirit of moderation which you affect in your diſcourſe? It is in vain you will plead irregularity of behaviour. Yourſelf bore teſtimony to his ſobriety, piety, and learning, by the ſubſcription of your hand.

I ſhall conclude my letter with the following facts, which I mention, more for the edification of others, than of yourſelf.

In the month of June 1769, a petition was offered by the under-graduates for an alteration in their ſtatutable dreſs, and it was granted. In the month of December 1771, a petition was offered by the under-graduates, either to be releaſed from an unſtatutable ſubſcription, or to be inſtructed in thoſe articles, which they would ſhortly be called upon to ſubſcribe. And this their modeſt, their reaſonable, their righteous petition was treated with contempt. Bluſh, Cambridge, bluſh!

CAMILLUS.

X. APRIL

X.

APRIL 30, 1772.

THE following curious and intereſting paper lately fell into my hands. It relates to a ſcheme now in agitation, which may poſſibly, in a little time, very much engage the attention of the public.

Your humble ſervant,

L. R.

The humble petition of certain of the LAITY of that part of Great Britain called England, to their repreſentatives in parliament aſſembled.

Sheweth,

THAT a conſiderable portion of the poſſeſſions of the engliſh people has long been appropriated to the ſupport of a religious eſtabliſhment, with an evident intention, that the perſons, who derive affluence and dignity from ſuch eſtabliſhment, ſhould devote them-

ſelves to the ſtudy of the goſpel; and be thereby enabled ſo to diffuſe its ſalutary light, that piety to God, and love to man, may become the ruling principles of individuals in every rank and order of the ſtate.

That your petitioners, with grief and ſorrow, are conſtrained to expreſs their apprehenſions, that the alarming growth of infidelity, and the conſequent profligacy of manners which diſgrace this age and nation, can be too well accounted for, from the manifeſt abſurdities and contradictions contained in the national ſyſtem of faith; and from thoſe imperfections in the forms of public worſhip, which, at the ſame time that they are treated as a ſubject of deriſion, by the enemies of our conſtitution, have long been given up as indefenſible, by the ableſt and ſincereſt of its friends; evils which owe their origin to prieſtcraft, and their continuance to the laws which injoin ſubſcription to humanly-deviſed articles and formularies of faith.

That your petitioners, deeply penetrated with a ſenſe of the utility of the ſacerdo-

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tal character, and ſincerely diſpoſed to reſpect thoſe perſons who worthily diſcharge it, are further conſtrained to declare, that, in their apprehenſion, the clergy of this kingdom have ſhewed themſelves to be either unacquainted with, or inſenſible of, the importance of their truſt: and that more eſpecially the higher orders of that body, though bound, by every tie of duty and honour, to ſtand forth in ſupport of an expiring religion, have, by a proſtitution of their authority and influence to the moſt unworthy purpoſes, and, it is to be feared, in defiance of their own convictions, invariably laboured to uphold the reign of ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm in this land.

That your petitioners are ſeriouſly perſuaded, that nothing but the preaching of the goſpel, in its priſtine ſimplicity, united with an affecting form of public worſhip, purified from the leaven of ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm, can produce any material alteration, in the preſent deplorable ſtate of the principles and manners of the engliſh people.

That many of your petitioners, juſtly

alarmed for their poſterity, are deprived of thoſe conſolations, which, in advancing age, and in the hour of calamity, moſt powerfully touch the human heart. They ſee and lament the religious corruptions of their own times, and tremble, leſt a ſtill more deplorable darkneſs, amounting almoſt to an extinction of the goſpel light; leſt a ſtill more portentous depravity of manners, and an increaſe of civil diſcord, precurſive of the deſtruction of the ſtate, ſhould mark the generation of their ſons.

That on account of the late conduct of the clergy, and from the conſideration of the nature of the abuſes complained of, your petitioners cannot indulge themſelves in any flattering expectations, that the church will herſelf reform the moſt obvious errors in her doctrine and diſcipline. That they therefore look up, as to their laſt reſource, to their repreſentatives in parliament aſſembled, (who, by their inſtitution, are required to take care that the conditions and reſtrictions, with which the public money is granted, are religiouſly obſerved; and whoſe right to inſpect into the conduct of every corporation

in the kingdom, is clear and indubitable,) intreating, ſupplicating, conjuring, every member of your honourable houſe earneſtly to aim at aboliſhing an obligation, which, at the ſame time that it lays the teacher under a moral neceſſity of prevaricating with his own conſcience, and of lying to his God, defrauds the hearer of his conſtitutional right to the pure milk of the word, and to that unadulterated bread of life, which the almighty hath diſpenſed in his goſpel, as his laſt, beſt bleſſing to mankind.

And your petitioners ſhall ever pray, &c.

XI.

TO THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.*

MAY 12, 1772.

MY LORD,

THAT the biſhop of Glouceſter ſhould profeſs himſelf a diſſenter from the eſtabliſhed

[* Dr. Frederick Cornwallis. At which time, Dr. Warburton was biſhop of Glouceſter; and Dr. Law, biſhop of Carliſle.]

bliſhed doctrines, and yet oppoſe diſſenters in their righteous claim to a toleration, is not ſurpriſing. That the biſhop of Carliſle ſhould manifeſt a diſinclination to take an active part in the projected plan of reformation, is much indeed to be lamented, yet he is held excuſable by thoſe, who are acquainted with the circumſtances of his ſituation. But, from you, my lord, a more conſiſtent and more manly deportment might with reaſon be expected. With a noble birth, you were ſuppoſed to inherit an independent ſpirit. You were educated in the ſeat of ſound philoſophy; you were bleſſed with the opportunity of arriving at a juſt conception of your chriſtian privileges, in conſequence of being placed under the tuition of a man, who may juſtly be eſteemed one of the greateſt ornaments of the engliſh bench. Inſtructed by the voice of a maſter in theology, you diſcerned the hopeleſs condition of man's natural ſtate, and were enabled to penetrate, by the eye of faith, into that better country, which the religion of the goſpel diſcloſes to our view. The origin of evil, its various conſequences, and its

ſubſer-

ſubſerviency to the reformation of individuals and the general good, were evidently diſplayed to you. The progreſſive diſpenſations of the almighty, each riſing in beautiful ſucceſſion, were exhibited to your ſight. In ſhort, my lord, in conſequence of Dr. Law's inſtructions, you commenced a rational believer; and, with him, you ſaw reaſon to deplore the diſgraceful contrariety between the religious eſtabliſhment of your country, and the uncorrupted goſpel of Chriſt. And, with reſpect to your worldly circumſtances, you are placed above the influence of either hope or fear.

From whence then are we to account for your late behaviour? I am not your enemy, my lord; I wiſh to ſee a full and ſatisfactory vindication of your conduct. Upon your elevation to the ſee of Canterbury, we were not taught to expect, that a double portion of Secker's perſecuting ſpirit would reſt upon Cornwallis. How are we to account from your grace's oppoſition to the late petition of the clergy? How will you defend your declaration, that there is no occaſion for any alteration in matters of diſcipline, or doctrine?

trine? How will you vindicate yourſelf for encouraging Dr. Hallifax, in an ungenerous attack upon the writings of your old tutor and friend? * Theſe, my lord, are charges of a ſerious nature: theſe are inconſiſtencies which muſt be removed, if you would wiſh to preſerve an unſullied reputation. If your grace has changed your former liberal ſentiments; if you actually believe the articles of the church of England; that is to ſay, if you actually believe the incarnation of the moſt high God; the doctrine of imputed righteouſneſs; the predeſtined reprobation of the majority of mankind; the eternal miſery of the unbaptized infant; the utter damnation of the heathen, jewiſh, and mahometan world; then, plainly and openly declare ſo. You have ſo long been a biſhop, and, therefore, have been ſo long unaccuſtomed to ſubſcription, that we have a ſort of

[* In the months of March and April, 1772, there appeared ſome letters, in one of the public prints, ſigned "Eraſmus;" theſe were generally aſcribed to Dr. Samuel Hallifax. As ſuch, they were ſoon afterwards conſidered by two opponents, who ſubſcribed themſelves, "Pediculo-maſtix," and "Cicero."]

of claim upon you to an authoritative renunciation of thoſe principles, which you received from your venerable tutor. At preſent, we are puzzled with the apparent inconſiſtencies in your character; when it is known that you maintain the aforeſaid tenets, we may indeed ſmile at that ſingularity of ſentiment, which can diſpoſe you to pay any attention to ſuch a ſyſtem of belief; but we ſhall no longer be aſtoniſhed at your practice.

RUFUS.

XII.

MAY 19, 1772.

ALTHOUGH the friends of reformation cannot be ignorant of the inſinuations daily thrown out by the epiſcopal bench, that an utter ſubverſion of the preſent form of church government, is aimed at by the petitioning clergy; yet, I truſt, they may ſafely confide in the candour of the good people of England, who will ever be averſe

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to the imputing of a crime, without ſome reaſonable preſumption of the guilt. The ſame obſervation will hold good, with reſpect to the more wild hypotheſis of Mr. Madan, who reviles the petitioning gentlemen, as a ſet of infidels aſſociated for the purpoſe of exterminating chriſtianity from this country. The following hints however, may not be improperly offered to the conſideration of their lordſhips, and their methodiſtical allies.

Firſt, it may be depended upon as fact, that Sir William Meredith was empowered to declare to the houſe of commons, that a ſubverſion of the preſent form of church government, was, by no means, either the deſign, or the wiſh of the aſſociation; and, that the perſons who compoſe it, are ſincere and hearty in their approbation of an eſtabliſhed form of public worſhip.

In the next place, their lordſhips may reſt aſſured, that the aſſociation intends to proceed, with all calmneſs and circumſpection, in their grand deſign; with a diſpoſition to attend to the advice of every well-wiſher to their undertaking, as far as ſhall

appear

appear expedient, upon the matureſt deliberation, yet, with the moſt determined reſolution never to depart from the ſimplicity of their plan. Satisfied in themſelves that the ſcriptures declare, in the cleareſt terms, the whole mind and will of the almighty, they will ever remonſtrate againſt all authoritative interpretations of them; which, when impoſed by human laws, in effect, become impious additions to God's word. And, perſuaded that the legiſlature alone has the right of determining the conditions, upon which they enjoy their temporalities, they will never conſent to any other application to the biſhops, than what might be alſo made with propriety to the temporal lords; that although the ſecurity already required at the time of ordination is, in their judgment, ſufficient to anſwer every reaſonable purpoſe, they will dutifully accede to any mode of expreſſing their attachment to the religion of Jeſus, and of their determination to preach it in its genuine ſimplicity, which the legiſlature, in its wiſdom, ſhall ſubſtitute in the place of the preſent ſubſcriptions; that the cauſe of the petitioners is daily growing

growing ſtronger, through the increaſing knowledge of the people; and that the prevalence of this or that party, appears to them as a matter of little moment in the ſcale, they being fully ſatisfied, that their remonſtrance muſt ſoon approve itſelf the voice of reaſon, and their cauſe, the cauſe of God.

POPLICOLA.

XIII.

MAY 28, 1772.

THE deplorable ſtate of morals in this country, has long been a conſtant theme of lamentation; but no remedy has been propoſed, (that of the late petition for the aboliſhing of ſubſcriptions excepted,) which affords the leaſt probability of removing a diſorder, that ſtrikes at the vitals of our conſtitution, both in church and ſtate. We even act, as if ignorant of the ſeat of the diſeaſe; we ſuppoſe it to be reſident in the natural diſpoſition of an headſtrong people; whereas

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it ſhould rather be ſearched for in our eſtabliſhed religion, and in our laws. The declamations of the moraliſt, the ſermons of the divine, are equally unable to reſiſt the force of the diſorder: and we muſt either ſeek for a more effectual antidote than has hitherto been applied, or reſign all further conſideration of the ſubject, deſpairing of a cure.

The vulgar, always influenced by immediate impreſſions, annex the ideas of injuſtice, moral turpitude, and impiety, to thoſe actions which they perceive to be, in general, attended with evil to the perſons who commit them. If the law ordains, that any reflection which is caſt upon the perſon of the ſovereign, ſhall be atoned for by fine or impriſonment, the vulgar, with lord ———, will adjudge even truth to be a libel. If the law ordains that the puniſhment of murder and of robbery ſhall be the ſame, thoſe crimes will appear equally atrocious in the ſight of the people. If the bribing of the electors of Great-Britain with the public money, in order that they may return a member agreeable to the court, be an offence, which, (though the greateſt that can

be committed either by a ſubject or a king,) is left undefined by the laws, the exemption of the offender from puniſhment cauſes him to be looked upon as innocent, in the apprehenſion of his fellow-citizens. If the laws have ordained that the heretical taint ſhall be effaced by fire, the common people are diſpoſed to praiſe the mercy of that ſentence, which condemns the body to be burnt for the good of the ſoul. And, in all caſes, where laws annex pain to thoſe actions, which are not detrimental in their natural conſequences to the community, and leave unnoticed thoſe crimes which ſtrike at the very exiſtence of a ſtate, or the happineſs of the individuals who compoſe it, the virtues and the vices will appear inveſted to the ſpectator; he will view the generous, upright, honourable action with hatred and abhorrence; and, ſet looſe from all reſtraint upon his paſſions, will plunge himſelf without remorſe, nay, even with complacency, into all the faſhionable extravagancies of impiety and vice.

Theſe general obſervations may be applied, with too much propriety, to very many of the laws of England at this day. I ſhall inſtance

inſtance at preſent in two caſes, reſerving the effect of bad laws, (particularly of thoſe which injoin ſubſcription to the thirty-nine articles of religion,) in retarding the progreſs of the human mind to its due perfection, for a future diſquiſition.

It is now well known, that a majority of the thinking clergy are diſpoſed to embrace the hypotheſis of Arius or Socinus, with reſpect to the perſon of Jeſus. And that the opinion of Athanaſius, though ſanctified by the acts of uniformity, is now exploded by almoſt every reader of the bible.

A law however is in force, which menaces an equal puniſhment to the impugner of the trinitarian figment, and to the apoſtate from the goſpel; the effect is obvious. The arian and ſocinian are looked upon with horror, by all the unthinking part of mankind; and the name of chriſtian is denied to him, who, believing the divine miſſion, denies the divinity of Chriſt. Nor will the evil ſpirit of intolerance, that evil ſpirit which is ſo deſtructive of the peace and good order of ſociety, ever be caſt out from us, until the unjuſt, abſurd, and ſanguinary law, to which in a great meaſure it owes its ex-

iſtence, be torn, with indignation, from the penal code.

In the age of Elizabeth, the principles of the papiſt and of the ſectary were judged equally inimical to the welfare of the ſtate. In conſequence of the laws, which were formed in compliance with this perſuaſion, the papiſt and the proteſtant diſſenter are even now held equally as objects of deteſtation by the vulgar herd; * inſomuch, that an attempt to effect a ſecurity for a ſet of men, to whom we are ſo much indebted for ſcripture knowledge, is equally offenſive to the haughty ſpirit of an engliſh biſhop, with the eſtabliſhment of a popiſh prelate in America, or the encouragement of popiſh emiſſaries among ourſelves.

LÆLIUS.

* A curious inſtance of this intolerant ſpirit happened, a few years ago, at the quarter ſeſſions at Derby. A clergyman of the church of England refuſed to take the oaths, while ſtanding upon the ſame level with an independent miniſter of the goſpel. Nor could he be prevailed upon, by the moſt earneſt remonſtrances, to qualify himſelf for preaching the doctrines of the meek and lowly Jeſus, until the juſtices permitted the little choleric gentleman to pronounce the oaths of allegiance and ſupremacy, from the elevation of an higher bench.

XIV.

TO THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF LINCOLN.*

AUGUST 8, 1772.

MY LORD,

WHEN the advocates for reformation conſider, how vigorouſly the preſent ſyſtem of religious deſpotiſm is ſupported by the epiſcopal bench: when they reflect, that the neceſſities of adminiſtration, in a country not much diſpoſed to place an implicit confidence in the ſervants of the public, will probably induce thoſe ſervants, for intereſted reaſons, to lean to that ſide of the queſtion which the hierarchy ſhall approve: when they further reflect, that the glaring inconſiſtencies and abſurdities in our formularies of faith, and modes of worſhip, have ſent forth a ſpirit of infidelity through the land, together with an attendant profligacy of manners, and an indifferency to every intereſting and ſerious ſubject, which may juſtly be deemed portentous; every hope may naturally

[* Dr. John Green.]

turally be ſuppoſed to languiſh; and every principle which animates them to perſeverance, may be expected to give way to the gloom of melancholy, and the darkneſs of deſpair.

But the cauſe of the goſpel and of religious liberty, will not, therefore, be deſerted. A band of proteſtants will, I truſt, be found diſpoſed to hope even againſt hope, and determined to aſſert the unalienable right of private judgment in matters of faith; and, if poſſible, to effect its eſtabliſhment in defiance of the open or diſguiſed oppoſition of proud, though proſtituted churchmen.

But, notwithſtanding the temptation to deſpondency from the preceding picture of the times, it is to be conſidered, that there are other circumſtances, contingently connected with the cauſe of proteſtantiſm, which, under God's good providence, may open the way to an effectual reformation. I ſhall mention a few of them to your lordſhip, although I know I ſhall pain you by the recital; but, my lord, you deſerve to feel the weight of more than ordinary indignation; you have denied a toleration to diſ-

ſenters,

ſenters, and would, therefore, be only juſtly puniſhed, were the glories of your order to be again eclipſed, or to ſet, to riſe no more.

I muſt, however, firſt premiſe, that there is alſo a ſet of gentlemen in the houſe of commons, who, to their native honour, virtue, and independence, have added a perfect knowledge of this truly proteſtant deſign, and are determined, on all proper occaſions, to ſubmit it to the public view, and ſupport it with all their influence and power, upon the ground, that the peace and good order of ſociety are materially concerned in the deciſion of the controverſy; and therefore will, probably, for ever continue to ſupport it, as knowing they are called upon to afford it their countenance and favour, by virtue of their being good citizens and good men.

But although the patronage of Meredith and Savile may be ſome encouragement to the aſſociated members, amidſt an oppoſition led on by Newdigate and Stanley, yet the friends of religious freedom diſcern ſtill more certain prognoſtics of approaching victory, than the countenance and ſupport of men, who, however virtuous, have as yet

been unſucceſsful in their ſtruggles for the civil liberties of England.

The articles of the church of England are ſo exquiſitely nonſenſical, and the authority of impoſing them ſo deſtitute of all rational foundation, that the moment the public attention is properly excited, the cauſe of the high churchmen is loſt for ever.

The following circumſtances will probably be the immediate cauſes of intereſting the public in an inquiry, which cannot but be fatal to religious deſpotiſm, and to that ſpirit of myſtery whereby it is ſupported.

The debate upon a limitation of the claims of certain eccleſiaſtical corporations, will be revived in the enſuing ſeſſions.

In this debate, the advantages propoſed by theſe inſtitutions will naturally come to be conſidered. This will bring on an inquiry into pluralities and commendums; and doubts may be raiſed by ſome, how your lordſhips can poſſibly attend your duty in parliament, and in the remote dioceſes of Exeter or Durham at the ſame time. Intereſt, my lord, intereſt of the ſame ſort which prevents your lordſhip from acting agreeably to your

your convictions, will urge the laity to theſe inquiries.

The increaſing ſpirit of improvements in agriculture will cauſe every landholder in England, experimentally to feel the evil of thoſe laws which diſcourage induſtry, by obliging the laborious huſbandman to pay the tythe of all that he enjoys; and will, therefore, in time, diſpoſe the independent gentry to adopt a change, leſs burthenſome to the nation, and poſſibly more advantageous to that uſeful body of men, the parochial clergy of this kingdom. In the courſe of agitating theſe important queſtions, they will naturally be led to propoſe ſome proper proviſion for the better performance of religious duties, by thoſe perſons who enjoy the greateſt ſhare of church emoluments. In conſequence of theſe inquiries, the pillars of prieſtcraft will be ſhaken to their foundations. Church authority, in controverſies of faith, and ſubſcription to human formularies of doctrine, the favourite engine of ſpiritual tyranny, will be utterly aboliſhed; the lamp of chriſtian knowledge be relumed, and the light of virtue which it kindles, end in perfect day. This connection between the

the cauſe of proteſtantiſm and the intereſts of the laity, is a connection which owes its birth to ſome late venal conduct in the houſe of ———s, and is now confirmed by the prelatical mode of oppoſition to the cauſe of chriſtian liberty and of chriſtian truth.

The aſſociation, without doubt, would wiſh they might prevail by a diſpaſſionate appeal to reaſon and the word of God. The perſons who compoſe it, will never make it their endeavour to ſucceed by other means. Theſe hints, my lord, are chiefly intended to ſhew yourſelf and brethren, that the epiſcopal emiſſaries, archdeacon Backhouſe and archdeacon Dickens, &c. have not acted agreeably to the uſual policy, in uniting cauſes, which your intereſt required ſhould be ever kept disjoined.

Inflated with pride, and with inſolence inſupportable, you now will not deign to anſwer either thoſe public remonſtrances, or thoſe private letters, in favour of alterations, which are addreſſed to you. Before many months are elapſed, you may be induced to court, in the moſt abject manner, the favour of the people, by a pretended concern for religion, and an affected zeal for reformation.

This

This letter is addreſſed to you, my lord, becauſe, in conſequence of your elevation to the divinity-chair at Cambridge, you had every opportunity of being acquainted with the cauſe of proteſtantiſm, and were once eſteemed its ſteady friend, though now become the moſt political biſhop in all England, perhaps in all the world.

There is ſomething ſo uniform in the character of your brethren, when I conſider them in that point of view, in which one would think they were deſirous of being conſidered, viz. as the firm and ſteady ſupporters of civil and religious deſpotiſm, that I am inclined to believe that a letter addreſſed to one of your bench, would, with very trifling alterations, ſuit you all; yet, when I view their former character and conduct, and reflect upon the different modes, and with what peculiar aggravations, they have endeavoured to evidence their abhorrence of religious liberty; ſo great is the variety, that I, probably, may be induced to addreſs a letter ſeparately to each.

CORNELIUS.

XV. TO

XV.

TO THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF NORWICH.*

AUGUST 18, 1772.

MY LORD,

A COOL indifference, to ſubjects of a ſerious and important nature, viſibly increaſes. The appetite for diſſipation and amuſement, the growth of gallic ſoil, and only pardonable when apparent in the female breaſt, hath ſubdued the manly majeſty of virtue in England's ſterner ſons. The friend of his country and of human nature looks up, in this diſtreſs, to a ſet of men, who are bound by the united obligations of honour, intereſt, and duty, to ſtand forth in ſupport of an expiring religion. But, alas! they have long deſerted their ſacred, their important truſt, and themſelves now labour to quench that light of knowledge and of virtue, which their profeſſion loudly calls upon them to hold

[* Dr. Philip Yonge.]

hold forth, in times of public degeneracy, to a diſſipated world.

This charge upon the clergy of this kingdom may be eſteemed ſevere, and being a general charge, may be therefore diſregarded. My lord, I will be more particular, although my plainneſs may diſpleaſe you. A diſpoſition to ſupport, and to extend the reign of darkneſs, by the inſtrumentality of the ſecular powers, is now, alas! but too apparent in every action, in every reſolution of your bench; nor is it difficult to aſſign the cauſe of ſuch aſtoniſhing proſtitution.

As one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed among the opponents of the cauſe of chriſtian liberty, and of chriſtian truth, I now addreſs myſelf to the ſolemn, ſtately, political, inquiſitorial biſhop of Norwich, once the candid, liberal, unreſerved, honeſt Phil. Yonge.

I will urge ſome topics to your lordſhip, which I think deſerving of your conſideration, not with any deſign of convincing you, for, my lord, you are already convinced, but with an intention that my readers may ſee the ſtate of our argument, and act in conſequence

quence of the light which I ſhall endeavour to afford them.

You muſt allow, my lord, that the ſtate both of the jewiſh and the heathen world, at the time when Jeſus and his apoſtles were commiſſioned to attempt its reformation, was corrupted beyond the example of all preceding generations. In fraud, injuſtice, irreligion, proſtitution, both of the laity and clergy, thoſe times were even worſe than our own.

To an ignorance of the almighty, and of his adorable perfections, was joined an utter depravity of manners. Devoid of every principle of virtue, the inhabitants of the earth diſhonoured themſelves by the practice of every ſpecies of vice. Rome, by enſlaving the nations, had utterly corrupted them. The degeneracy was now become complete; ſhe was herſelf enſlaved.

In this ſtate and condition of things, the light of truth was ſent down from heaven to diſperſe the ignorance and darkneſs of the world, and to illuminate, with her pureſt ray, the intellectual and moral powers of the mind.

Awed,

Awed, even to enchantment, by the dazzling ſplendors of the religion of the goſpel, the powers of darkneſs ſuſpended for a ſeaſon their unavailing oppoſition. Righteouſneſs, with her attendant, peace, diffuſed ſweet ſerenity over every ſcene of ſocial life; and the glorious hope of immortality, which the philoſophic ſect endeavoured to reſt upon the airy and fantaſtic baſis of metaphyſic reaſonings, now eſtabliſhed on the firmer evidence of fact, diſplayed its power in the production of each ſterling virtue.

But the religion, which the jewiſh prieſts oppoſed, a worſe ſucceſſion of the tribe corrupted; 'till at length the nations, involved, by their traditions, in more than their primæval darkneſs, ſunk in ſecond night.

The gloomy ſpectre of ſuperſtition, engendered in the dark receſſes of the cloyſter, for a time retired, at the dawn of that light which broke upon the world, at the æra of the reformation. But, unhappily for mankind, the intrigues of prieſts again prevailed, who, by their uninterrupted endeavours to fetter and reſtrain the freeborn mind, in its

religious

religious diſquiſitions, by withholding the knowledge of that heavenly truth, which alone can ſupply weak, miſerable, erring mortals, with ſufficient ſtrength to ſtem the torrent of impetuous paſſions, have done what in them lies, to perpetuate every opinion of baleful tendency, and every vice of frightful aſpect, in this devoted land.

The point I aim at eſtabliſhing, by theſe conſiderations, is, the propriety and advantage of ſupporting the independency and ſupremacy of the word of God, in every ſtate, which admits the divine authority of the ſcriptures, and my proof is reſted on the ſolid baſis of hiſtoric fact. If the acknowledgment of the goſpel, at the time of its promulgation, produced ſo immediate an improvement of manners in the human ſpecies, a ſimilar effect muſt attend its republication; when diſincumbered from the weight of that ſtupendous mountain of myſteries and traditions, under which it has ſo long lain buried, it is once more preached in its priſtine purity, and held forth to man, arrayed in its native veſt of ſimplicity and truth.

It would be a departure from my purpoſe, particularly to point out thoſe erroneous doctrines, which your lordſhip's predeceſſors have impoſed on the inhabitants of this country; and for the ſupport of which, they are compelled to pay tythes of all that they poſſeſs. My proper queſtion is, and the united wiſdom of all the biſhops in England cannot anſwer it, what pretenſions have you to "authority in controverſies of faith?" What are the grounds of that power, whereby you preſume to impoſe upon us, any human interpretations of ſcripture whatſoever, as the truths of God? It ſhall be my future purpoſe to convince my countrymen, that as you cannot derive that authority, which is the bitter fountain of all theologic diſputation, from the fundamental principles of the ſocial compact; as you dare not endeavour to eſtabliſh your pernicious empire over conſcience, by arguments deduced from ſcripture; for the origin of your power you muſt go to Rome, and confeſs that you owe the continuation of it to the favour of a proſtituted court.

A reaſon may be demanded, why I addreſs this letter perſonally to you, my lord of Norwich. It is becauſe your lordſhip avowed, in a public manner, and I think in your cathedral church, your abhorrence of a cauſe, which I eſteem the cauſe of God and truth; and, at the ſame time, diſgraced your character, and offended many of your hearers, by ungenerous and intemperate reflections on that worthy perſon, who, in a late immortal work, has ſupported, with invincible ſtrength of argument, the cauſe of every proteſtant in Europe. If you deny my accuſation, let the publication of your compoſition decide the controverſy. To that compoſition I appeal. The voice of the Confeſſional was not the voice of ſlander; but ſlander was the eſſence of your charge.

CORNELIUS.

XVI. TO

XVI.

TO THE MOST REV. THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

AUGUST 25, 1772.

MY LORD,

I HAVE no occaſion to inform you, that the voice of the public, that awful voice which commands the reſpect and veneration even of thoſe who are raiſed in power and glory far above their peers, becauſe it is ever found reſponſive to the voice of conſcience, was once diſpoſed to conſecrate your name to late poſterity, as the ſupporter of civil and religious liberty, as the friend of every ſocial virtue.

Your noble birth, by which you are allied to men of worth and honour; the ſuperior advantage derived from your education under a man, with reſpect to knowledge and abilities, deſervedly eſteemed one of the firſt of his profeſſion, and whoſe conduct, in private life, renders him an ornament to human nature; the place of your education,

Cambridge, juſtly celebrated as the ſeat of ſcience, and of every liberal art, which can render us uſeful to our country and ourſelves; the conſtant tenor of your life and converſation, while reſiding in that place, and not yet forgotten in your college; together with the firſt fruits of your public conduct, raiſed high the flattering expectation, that, as you roſe in dignity, the flame of your virtue would burn with brighter luſtre, and enlarge the wide circumference of its activity.

Were I diſpoſed to give way to the ſpirit of invective, I might, with glowing ſtrength of expreſſion, paint the ſad reverſe of the character you once ſuſtained. But I will ſpare myſelf and you. I will only lament the public diſappointment, in beholding a Cornwallis, at laſt, degraded to the rank of common men. I might proceed in the ſtrain of modern ſatiriſts, until I had diveſted you of learning, moral honeſty, and common ſenſe: but, my lord, this latter conduct would be manifeſt injuſtice. I am ſatisfied your heart is naturally good. Your underſtanding, I judge, to be clear and unclouded;

clouded; and your learning, I know to be ſuch, as might be expected to be found in a perſon of ſound judgment and ſerious diſpoſition; at one time, you were duly penetrated with a ſenſe of the importance of religious knowledge, and led, in early life, to improvement in it, by a tutor, who, to the ſkill of a maſter, added the affectionate exhortations of a friend.

In ſuch circumſtances, my lord, it is not to be wondered at, if every advocate of the goſpel rejoiced in your elevation. It is not to be wondered at, that, notwithſtanding late appearances, it is even ſtill expected that ſome future day will behold you exerting your abilities, and employing all the influence of your high ſtation, in ſupporting that cauſe which you cannot but know to be the cauſe of God.

I write not thus, my lord, with a view of intereſting you in the cauſe of the petitioning clergy; they look up for redreſs to God alone, who, in his good time, will be attentive to their prayer. They neither court your favour, nor do they fear your frowns. I reſpect your rank and ſtation in ſociety;

but in matters of a religious nature we are ſurely brethren; and I ſhall therefore act as one who has a right to uſe the ſame fraternal freedom which Paul uſed, when ſpectator of Peter's pitiful, ſhuffling conduct; were you ſurrounded with all the terrors of the inquiſition, I would "withſtand you to the face."

Permit me to remind you, that the high office you hold in the engliſh church, is to be eſteemed in the light of an important truſt; repoſed in you by the proteſtant conſtitution of your country. Your grace is placed in the primate's ſeat, with an intention that you ſhould evidence yourſelf the faithful guardian of that ſacred code, which contains the laws of God, and the hiſtory of his diſpenſations to his creatures; and, therefore, you are bound, by every tie of honour and of conſcience, to maintain inviolate the purity and independency of that faith, which was once delivered to the ſaints.

It was naturally to be expected, that human policy would endeavour to render the revelation of God, ſubſervient to the mean, the

the narrow intereſts of worldly men; would endeavour to debaſe, by foul corruptions, its abſolute perfection. You were endowed with dignity and power, in order that, aſſiſted by your right reverend brethren, you might form a barrier againſt the encroachments of the adverſary; and, that the teachers of the word might, under your protection and patronage, be enabled undauntedly to hold forth the truths of heaven, in their original ſimplicity, and their native ſplendour.

When human adminiſtrations, therefore, aſſert, that an unlimited power of declaring from the pulpit, whatever doctrines the preacher himſelf ſhall be perſuaded are agreeable to the word of God, ſhould not be indulged to the miniſters of the goſpel, the gentlemen who generally compoſe them act in character; their language is agreeable to the uſual tenor of their conduct; and they are, in part, excuſable, as they are under no particular bond of allegiance to that monarch, whoſe kingdom is not of this world. But, if your grace can ſubmit to ſee the goſpel of your bleſſed maſter diſgracefully

ſhackled,* by human formularies of faith and doctrine, without offering, as in duty bound, a ſingle remonſtrance in its favour. If your grace can condeſcend to connive at the magiſtrate's claim to a deſpotic empire over conſcience, to a right of directing the opinions of the ſubject, to a power of denying toleration to every form of worſhip, that excepted which is approved by himſelf; I leave it to be determined, by your own heart, whether you are not guilty in the ſight of God and of man. You, in fact, deſert the truſt repoſed in you, by your country, which, not only

* We are told that, at the acceſſion of Elizabeth, a curious pageant was prepared, in which were repreſented Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, in chains, and requeſting to be ſet free. That princeſs, quickly perceiving the meaning of the device, replied, let us firſt inquire whether the priſoners wiſh to be releaſed. The ſpirit of civil and religious deſpotiſm dictated this anſwer. Yet there was ſome appearance of decency in the expreſſion. A ſimilar requeſt, in favour of the ſame priſoners, was made laſt winter, in the houſe of commons. The petition was diſmiſſed without a reading, becauſe, as is apparent from the votes, it was apprehended that the granting of ſuch liberty, to the aforeſaid priſoners, might endanger the union between the engliſh and the ſcottiſh kingdoms!

only acknowledges the religion of Jeſus to be divine, but alſo maintains that the whole of his religion is contained in the books of holy writ; and, in the large appointments you poſſeſs through her bounty, declares it to be her wiſh, that this religion may be ſupported, pure and undefiled, againſt the artifices of thoſe, who would impiouſly proſtitute it to the unworthy purpoſes of ſecular ambition. And you muſt be guilty alſo of prevaricating with your own conſcience, and with your God, as even you have ſolemnly declared your perſuaſion, that the holy ſcriptures contain all doctrine which is required for ſalvation; and your reſolution to look upon them, as the only rule of chriſtian faith and practice. You may diſguiſe probably your averſion to a reformation, under the pretence that you are alſo bound to ſupport the doctrines of the engliſh church; but if you know thoſe doctrines to be contrary to the doctrines of the goſpel, (and with ſuch lights and aſſiſtance as you have had, you cannot but know this to be the caſe,) reflect, that there is a day approaching when the

aforeſaid plea of attachment to an act-of-parliament religion, in oppoſition to the paramount authority of ſcripture, cannot poſſibly avail you.

CORNELIUS.

XVII.

AUGUST 29, 1772.

THE virtue of fortitude, or a ſteady perſeverance in that courſe of action which our reaſon, upon matureſt conſideration, hath approved, has always been eſteemed an eſſential requiſite in the conduct of every great and generous deſign. It is diſtinguiſhed from an obſtinate attachment to any particular ſentiment, or mode of action, rather by the previous circumſtances, than by any material difference in the energy itſelf. The obſtinate man, haſtily adopts an opinion, forms his reſolution with precipitation, and perſeveres, though the oppoſing reaſon of mankind, and frequently his own convictions, call loudly on him to deſiſt. Whereas the

the man who is truly reſolute and brave, with calmeſt circumſpection views the conſequences; with the greateſt diffidence, calculates the chances of ſucceſs; and, having ſummoned every faculty of his mind to aid him in the determination, reſolves; and then, unterrified by oppoſing difficulties, purſues his reſiſtleſs courſe, 'till approving heaven crowns his virtue with its due reward.

I am led into theſe reflections, from an eſtimate of the ſtate of religious controverſy in this country. The remonſtrance of the late clerical petitioners, againſt ſubſcription to any formulary of faith and doctrine, holy ſcripture excepted, and the juſt and prudent attempt of the diſſenters, to effect, for themſelves and their poſterity, a legal toleration, are deſigns wherein it is honourable for a chriſtian and an engliſhman to take an animated part. The manner in which both of them have been conducted by the friends of religious liberty, has been ſuch, as might reaſonably be expected from the patrons of ſo noble a cauſe. And a ſteady, inflexible perſeverance in the ſame meaſures, which

is

is not to be doubted, will, I truſt, ſoon effect for both, a ſatisfactory redreſs.

With reſpect to the clerical petitioners, their cauſe has been artfully confounded by the adverſary, with one of a very different kind; their attempt has been repreſented as a public attack upon the doctrines contained in the articles of our church. Whereas it muſt appear to every plain and candid man, who has peruſed the petition, that it is a remonſtrance againſt the authority of thoſe perſons who impoſed them, without lawful warrant, upon the conſciences of their brethren. Were I deſired to give my opinion of their deſign, to any well diſpoſed clergyman, who wanted information, I would tell him, that the petition contained a requeſt for the real eſtabliſhment of the ſixth article of the church of England: an article, which is virtually aboliſhed by the impoſition of the eight-and-thirty that remain; and, expreſsly contradicted, by that clauſe in the twentieth article, which aſſerts, that "the church hath authority in controverſies of faith."

The queſtion thus ſtated is intirely diſtinct

tinct from any queſtion about doctrine. The trinitarian and the ſocinian, the arminian and the calviniſt, may jointly agree in aſſerting the ſupremacy of their divine maſter in all matters of faith, however they may vary in their private interpretations of his words; and, however zealous for their reſpective tenets, may honeſtly declare, that they are content to appeal to reaſon and to ſcripture, inſtead of a convocation, for a deciſion of their conteſts.

This circumſtance alſo juſtifies them in making their application to the houſe of commons, rather than to the convocation, or the epiſcopal bench. Did the petition contain a requeſt for the reviſal of the articles; an application to any lay juriſdiction would be indeed an abſurdity. But the queſtion, whether God, or his creatures, ſhould dictate in matters of faith, requires no depth of theological learning; and, therefore, the appeal was very properly made directly to the legiſlature, which, out of an undue reſpect to the clerical order, had very unadviſedly veſted that high authority in man.

Let then the generous friends of this manly attempt

attempt go on, with undaunted reſolution, in their courſe. Oppoſition may naturally be expected from a certain bench. But, in a cauſe where truth and liberty are ſo eſſentially concerned, they have reaſon to hope, that all oppoſition will at length fall before them, and the inventions of men no longer be exalted above the revelation of God and his Chriſt. Their well projected deſign has now ſtood the teſt of the ſevereſt inquiry. The higher orders of eccleſiaſtics, who are the moſt virulent of their oppoſers, have, in conſequence of their denial of a toleration to the learned and conſcientions diſſenters, loſt all eſtimation with the people. The ſentiments of the repreſentatives of Great Britain have already been declared in a cauſe, which is very nearly connected with that of the clerical remonſtrants. And it may with confidence be expected, that the deſcendants of thoſe barons, who, upon former clerical encroachments, ſo zealouſly ſupported the honour and independency of the laws of their country, will, upon a future application, be equally zealous for the honour and independency of the laws of their God.

LÆLIUS.

XVIII. TO

XVIII.

TO THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF LICHFIELD AND COVENTRY.

SEPTEMBER 12, 1772.

MY LORD,

WHEN I involve the whole epiſcopal bench in one general charge of departing from thoſe liberal principles which alone can juſtify our ſeparation from the church of Rome, my accuſation is verified by your own demeanour. I found my aſſertion on two remarkable facts, the memorial of which will long remain, as ſignal inſtances of inconſiſtency and intolerance in a ſociety, which claims the title of a reformed and proteſtant church. The facts I allude to, are, the oppoſition of the biſhops to the late petition of the clergy; and their rejection of the equitable claim of the proteſtant diſſenters, in the houſe of lords. The notoriety of the latter occurrence, will render all proof of your

[* Dr. Brownlow North.]

your interference in that inſtance unneceſſary; with reſpect to the former, I ſhall mention a few circumſtances, pretty well authenticated, and draw ſuch concluſions from them as reaſon warrants, and therefore candour will concede.

I have no occaſion to inform your lordſhip, that it is an idea adopted by ſtateſmen, in all doubts and difficulties of a profeſſional kind, to conſult the leading perſons of that profeſſion, wherein the controverſy is moved. Should there ariſe any appearance of ſuch diſſatisfaction in the army, as would juſtify the interference of adminiſtration, recourſe would be had, with propriety, to the opinion of a board of general officers upon the ſubject; and the miniſter would demean himſelf with a proper degree of attention to their ſentiments, not ſubmitting, however, implicitly to their determinations, but reſerving the liberty of judging for himſelf, how far the perſons applied to, might be intereſted in the report.

The ſame wiſe meaſures are made uſe of in caſes relative to the law. Although, therefore, a doubt may be moved, whether the

the biſhops be, in fact, the leading perſons of the profeſſion, in point of learning and knowledge of the goſpel; yet, the friends of the petition had not much reaſon to complain, nor indeed did they complain, that a ſimilar mode of conduct was adopted, at the beginning of the controverſy, in a caſe wherein the intereſts of both church and ſtate might be very materially concerned.

But, before I enter upon the hiſtory and event of this inquiry, I muſt be indulged in ſaying a few words upon thoſe circumſtances, which although they ſhew the propriety of miniſterial application to the biſhops for information, evidence the wiſdom of the petitioners in waving all kind of addreſs to their ſuperiors in the church; and, which, would alſo have determined the miniſter, while the cauſe was debating by the repreſentatives of the people, to have reſtrained your indecent oppoſition at that juncture, by hinting to your lordſhips, that you might be called upon to give your opinion in your places, when the matter came properly before you in the houſe of lords.

It muſt be owned, that the nature of the

petitioners' requeſt was not, at firſt, generally underſtood: and the caution with which the petition was circulated, a caution neceſſarily obſerved, in order to prevent a copy of it from appearing publicly, previous to its preſentation, added to the obſcurity. To the miniſter, it had the aſpect of Elijah's cloud, ſmall indeed, and undefined in its appearance, yet ſuch as would raiſe an apprehenſion that it might poſſibly fill the whole political horizon with ſtorms and tempeſts.

Your noble brother, therefore, with ſome appearance of propriety, addreſſed himſelf for information to the epiſcopal bench. And, had the affair turned out a petition for a new tranſlation of the bible, for a reviſal of the articles, or alterations in the liturgy, he might poſſibly have been vindicated in referring the matter intirely to your arbitration, and in abiding by your report.

But the petition contained argument, not of theological diſputation, but of very different kind; argument, in which the peace and good order of ſociety were very materially concerned.

It conſidered the ſtate as already having eſtabliſhed

eſtabliſhed the religion of Jeſus in theſe kingdoms, and as acknowledging, by various public acts, that the ſcriptures of the old and new Teſtament contained a revelation of the will of God.

It ſet forth the danger of departure from that revelation, by impoſing humanly deviſed formularies of faith and morals upon engliſhmen, as ſcripture faith, and as ſcripture morals; and by confirming ſuch impoſition, with the ſtamp of parliamentary approbation.

It preſented to the view of the legiſlature an inconſiſtency in the laws of England, in the caſe of men, who, at their ordination, were bound by the moſt ſolemn declarations, through every period of their miniſtry, to employ each ſtudious hour in the inveſtigation of the will of God, and upon every opportunity faithfully to propound it to the people committed to their charge; yet, at the ſame time, bound to abide by a ſyſtematic formulary of abſtruſe and precarious doctrines, confeſſedly of man's device. A formulary generally ſubſcribed in early life, and, in conſequence of the preciſion of its terms,

and of that high authority whereby it is eſtabliſhed, preclusive of the exerciſe of private judgment, the aids of human learning, the information of maturer years.

Laſtly, it repreſented the inexpediency of ſuch impoſition, in a political light, by pointing out in how great a variety of ways and manners, it prevented the clergy from fulfilling their duty, as the public inſtructors of the people.

The petition therefore was a repreſentation of the caſe of individuals of various profeſſions, in a matter wherein their own conſciences were primarily concerned. Their firſt and only application was made to the powers which alone could grant them a redreſs; and, ſuch reaſons were urged, as proved that the ſtate could not be prejudiced, but might be benefitted, by acceding to their requeſt.

But to return from my digreſſion. Adminiſtration having, as I obſerved before, in the infancy of the affair, applied to a certain great dignitary for information, received for anſwer, "no occaſion for any alterations;" or, in other words, that the church, with

with reſpect to doctrine, to diſcipline, and worſhip, was as perfect as ſhe could be. An aſſertion, whoſe truth I ſhall not at this time examine: I ſhall only obſerve, that, by this anſwer, the judgment of the miniſter was impoſed upon; and he was ſo far led from the real ſtate of the queſtion, that, in a conference, with which he very politely obliged ſome gentlemen of the aſſociation, he conſtantly aſſured them, that the perſons he generally converſed with upon the ſubject, were not inclined to innovations! My lord, you know full well, the whole requeſt of the petitioners might have been granted, without a ſingle innovation, in that ſenſe of the term in which his lordſhip uſed it; as no innovation in the government, the doctrine, or the worſhip of the church was hinted at in the petition, which might, with propriety, have been rather ſtiled, "A remonſtrance to the civil powers in favour of the religious rights of all mankind." The great dignitary, therefore, ſhould have had the candour and judgment to have ſtated the real caſe in controverſy to adminiſtration, inſtead of endeavouring to miſlead the perſons who compoſed

it, not only by a falſe, but an impertinent aſſertion.

But this was not the whole of epiſcopal interference. I omit the mention of that influence, which was exerted in every dioceſe of the kingdom, while the petition was circulating. I omit the threats and intreaties of individuals on the bench. I omit the affair of intruſion into the cloſet of the king, and the inhuman advice therein ſuggeſted. I confine myſelf ſolely to the tranſactions of tueſday the fourth of February, when a deputation of your order waited on lord North. I do not write as if I were preſent at the interview, but the meaſures agreed upon, in conſequence of that interview, were apparent, when adminiſtration poured its legions into the field on the enſuing thurſday; the meaſures were apparent, in the plan of operations which was declared by lord North in the houſe of commons; though, fortunately for the petitioners, it was ſuddenly changed when the intemperate Newdigate broke the line of battle, and gave us an advantage, which I truſt we have

have both the ability and the ſpirit to improve.

The facts of interference being ſettled, my next ſtep ſhould be to ſhew, that in the caſe of the diſſenters bill, as well as the clerical petition, they amount to a departure from the proteſtant cauſe. And this might be done, with great eaſe and propriety, in a ſeries of letters to your lordſhip's brethren, in which the writer might not only inſiſt upon the abſurdity and inexpediency of attempting to reduce to an heavy uniformity, the naturally lawleſs ſentiments of the freeborn mind, in matters of religion; but might alſo evince the abſolute impoſſibility of propoſing any ſet of explanatory articles whatſoever, for general ſubſcription, in which the majority of the clergy can agree.

With reſpect to the motives which could induce your lordſhips to be guilty of what appears to the world ſo great an inconſiſtency, they cannot be accounted for, without ſuppoſing the bench, in general, to be infected with the ruling manners of the age. Yet I will readily acknowledge, and it is with pleaſure I make the exception, that I do know, perſonally,

ſonally, ſome few of your order, who, before this controverſy, appeared to me in the light of juſt and worthy men, friends to the ſocial virtues, friends to religion, learning, and to true deſert. As individuals, I am ſtill inclined to reſpect them; and, of ſuch, I will ever ſpeak, I will ever think with candour; but, even in their caſe, I muſt lament that a ſpirit of attachment to the intereſts of a pitiful corporation, ſhould ſo far blind their ſight, as to render them adverſe or inattentive to a queſtion, which ſo materially concerns the nobler intereſts of the community, the cauſe of univerſal chriſtianity, and their own emolument and glory, as the conſtitutional guardians of a proteſtant church.

CORNELIUS.

XIX.

OCTOBER 17, 1772.

DR. TUCKER, in the poſtulata, on which he founds his "Apology for the church of England," has puzzled me to ſome purpoſe. He aſſerts, that all ſocieties muſt have ſome common "center of union;" and that thoſe perſons

perſons, who propoſe themſelves to be candidates for offices and honourable diſtinctions, in any ſociety, muſt be ſuppoſed to approve of its "center of union," in the main.

"Center of union!"— What can be meant by a center of union? — I am puzzled, beyond meaſure, by this ſame center of union.

I have looked into the thirty-nine articles, into the athanaſian creed, but find no "center of union" there; I have looked into the canons of the church, where I find many hard names, and many hard things, but no "center of union" there. After much inquiry, I think I ſee ſomething that throws light upon the matter, in the fifth definition of the firſt book of ſir Iſaac Newton's Principia.

I will, therefore, give the definition itſelf, and make ſuch remarks upon it as ſeem pertinent to the caſe in hand.

Philoſophiæ naturalis principia mathematica.
lib. i. definitio v.

Vis centripeta eſt vis, qua corpora verſus punctum aliquod, tanquam ad "centrum", undique trahuntur, impelluntur, vel utcunque tendunt. i. e.

The

The centripetal force is that force, whereby bodies are from every quarter drawn, impelled, or do any how tend to a point as to a " center."

It is well known to philoſophers, and to ſuch I addreſs myſelf, that the principle of gravitation, is that principle which binds together the various bodies which compoſe the ſolar ſyſtem; and that the point, to which theſe bodies tend, and in which, were the projectile force to be deſtroyed, they would be all united, is placed in or near the ſun.

The ſun is, therefore, juſtly eſteemed the " center of union" in the ſolar ſyſtem.

Let us now conſider the eccleſiaſtical ſyſtem, i. e. the ſyſtem of the modern clergy, and ſee how far the compariſon will hold.

The court, is the common " center of union," or of gravitation to this ſyſtem.

The vis centripeta, or centripetal force, is the power of conferring Dr. Tucker's " offices and honourable diſtinctions."

The biſhops, are the larger bodies in this ſyſtem; ſome at greater, ſome at leſſer diſtances perpetually revolving round their ſun, rejoicing

rejoicing, as they roll, in the heat and radiance of the royal favour.

The moons or ſatellites, in this ſyſtem, are their lordſhip's chaplains and dependants.

The archbiſhops of Canterbury and York, like Jupiter and Saturn, mightily influence their inferior brethren.

Mercury repreſents the biſhop of Peterborough; Mars, my lord of Glouceſter; and the heavy, dull, phlegmatic biſhop of —— is repreſented by the earth.

The comet of 1680 (let the Cambridge men beware of it) is the univerſity of Oxford; a few years ago in its aphelion, but now, with rapidity, deſcending to the ſun.

The words "undique trahuntur," i. e. "are drawn from all parts," imply, that atheiſts and infidels, arminians, jacobites and papiſts, are lured by Dr. Tucker's "offices and honourable diſtinctions," to enter into the church.

The word "impelluntur," i. e. "are driven," imports, that men are driven to ſubſcribe the thirty-nine articles by their parents or guardians, by their expectations of preferment, by their apprehenſions of ſtarving, &c.

&c. ſometimes, ſorely againſt their will, and, nine times in ten, in direct oppoſition to the repulſive power of their conſcience.

And laſtly, the words "utcunque tendunt," i. e. "any way tend," ſignify, that it is conſidered as a matter of very little conſequence, in this univerſal gravitation towards Dr. Tucker's "offices and honourable diſtinctions," what meaſures a man takes to get his preferment, provided he ſucceeds at laſt.

I think I have now diſcovered the "center of union," which, according to Dr. Tucker, the ſubſcribing members of the church of England "approve of in the main."

ACADEMICUS.

XX.

TO THE REV. DR. TUCKER, DEAN OF GLOUCESTER.

OCTOBER 22, 1772.

SIR,

YOUR character for integrity and honour, I am told, is truly reſpectable; the information gave me pleaſure, and the circumſtance

ſtance of your appealing to the underſtandings of your fellow-citizens, in the controverſy concerning ſubſcription, entitles you to the reſpect of the petitioners, whatever may be the complection of your principles. Whenever the biſhops ſhall, in like manner, be diſpoſed to appeal to the tribunal of reaſon and the ſcripture, they will be treated with all that reſpect, to which their ſtation may entitle them.

But though I applaud the open and undiſguiſed manner of your appearing in this controverſy, I have objections to your method of conducting the argument; and am, beyond meaſure, concerned on account of the illiberal reflections contained in your poſtſcript; theſe could only have been inſerted, for the purpoſe of throwing an odium on the perſons of the petitioners, and on their cauſe.

The deſign of my preſent letter is to obſerve to you, that you expreſs yourſelf obſcurely, where you might have expreſſed yourſelf with perſpicuity; and that you make uſe of terms, without giving us any clue whereby we may arrive at their preciſe and proper meaning.

Your

Your argument will be cleared very much, if, in your next edition, you give us a definition of "the church of England," and explain to us, whether, by theſe words, you mean a ſociety merely clerical, or that maſs of people who have, by baptiſm, been admitted into her communion.

If you mean by "the church of England," that maſs of people who have been baptized into her communion, I muſt entreat you to review the queſtions propoſed to the ſponſors or proxies at the time of baptiſm; and you will then ſee that the thirty-nine articles muſt be underſtood, to be the declared faith only of thoſe, who have in maturer age ſubſcribed them.

It is firſt demanded of the ſponſor in baptiſm, "whether he or ſhe, in the name of the child to be baptized, renounces the devil and all his works, together with the pomps and vanities of the world, and the carnal deſires of the fleſh?

An anſwer is returned by the ſponſor; "I renounce them all."

The apoſtles' creed is next recited.

An

An anſwer is returned; "all this I ſtead-faſtly believe."

An inquiry follows; "wilt thou be baptized in this faith?"

The anſwer is given in theſe words; "that is my deſire."

At confirmation, the biſhop ſolemnly demands of every catechumen, whether he renews his baptiſmal vow? Upon an anſwer in the affirmative, the catechumen is admitted to the privilege of participating of the lord's ſupper, according to the uſage of the church of England, and thus becomes, legally and conſtitutionally, a member of that church. In this whole proceſs, no other articles, no other doctrine is heard of, beſides the doctrine of the apoſtles' creed.

Let Dr. Tucker now lay his hand upon his heart, and aſk himſelf this queſtion; are the thirty-nine articles, the center of union to the lay members of the engliſh church? If you mean, by the ſociety in queſtion, the collective body of biſhops, prieſts, and deacons of the church of England, ſay ſo in one word, and we ſhall know what anſwer to afford you. I ſuppoſe you meant

honourably,

honourably, when you indited your apology, and did not intend to puzzle the queſtion, in order to enable the biſhops to ſtifle the intereſting inquiry into thoſe rights, which cannot be renounced, without renouncing the principles on which every proteſtant eſtabliſhment muſt reſt.

LÆLIUS.

XXI.

TO THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF LONDON. *

NOVEMBER 3, 1772.

MY LORD,

I AM perſuaded it is the part of charity, not only to give to each doubtful action the moſt favourable conſtruction, but even, in ſome caſes, to ſtruggle with appearances; and with holy violence to our own convictions, to force upon ourſelves the perſuaſion, that worth, that honour, that religion, conſtitute the motive, when the external action is diſtinguiſhed by every characteriſtic mark of the meaneſt proſtitution.

I am

[* Dr. Richard Terrick.]

I am perſuaded alſo, that ſuch mode of procedure is more eſpecially becoming in our reflections upon the conduct of thoſe who enjoy ſuperior rank or ſtation. The laws of true politeneſs, which are the laws of decency and order, require it; and it is a matter of the moſt ſerious conſequence to ſociety, that the perſons who are poſſeſſed of offices and honourable diſtinctions, ſhould generally be ſuppoſed to excel their brethren as much in virtue, as in dignity and power; and that their external ſtate and grandeur ſhould appear to fade and languiſh, when compared with the ſuperior glories which radiate from the mind. But moſt of all, it is incumbent upon us to preſerve this modeſty and diffidence of deportment, in the caſe of thoſe, whoſe ſacred office in higher meaſure claims our veneration, and who, in ſcripture language, have been decorated with the appellation of "angels" in the church of God.

With ſuch convictions on my mind, and with a ſpirit not uncandid, how great muſt be your departure from propriety of character! how flagrant your violations of de-

cency and honour, which can induce me to aſſert, that if a ſettled deſign were formed to root up chriſtianity from its very foundations, the abettors of ſuch purpoſe would employ many of the preſent biſhops, as agents in their work; and, would think, that the utter annihilation of all vital religion in theſe kingdoms, would be inſured by the elevation of a Terrick, to the epiſcopal throne of London.

As nothing is more pleaſing to the man, whoſe breaſt is ornamented with the conſciouſneſs of each nobler virtue, than the ſight of truth, ſo nothing is more odious to the degraded mind; and, therefore, when I reflect upon the ſtern demeanor, the intolerant ſpirit, the vindictive temper of the haughty prelate, whom I am now addreſſing, I ſhould have every thing to fear, in conſequence of my preſumption; but an obſervation of the inimitable marquis of Beccaria diſſipates my apprehenſions, for he aſſures me that "tyrants never read."

Yet thoſe who are in bondage unto tyrants, may peruſe theſe lines; and, if the arguments contained in them, ſhall animate a ſingle

a ſingle engliſhman to aſſert thoſe religious rights and privileges, with which the conſtitution of his country hath inveſted him, the publication of them will have anſwered the honeſt purpoſe of my ſoul.

In my preſent letter to your lordſhip, I ſhall not inſiſt upon your indecent ſupport of the earl of ———, in his canvaſs for an office of dignity at Cambridge. I ſhall not inſiſt upon the treachery of your conduct, during the late competition for the county of Eſſex. I ſhall not inſiſt upon the flagrant falſhood, uttered in the face of this great nation, while the righteous cauſe of the diſſenting clergy was agitating in the houſe of lords. I ſhall now confine myſelf to the caſe of the petitioning clergy, and lay before the world the iniquity of epiſcopal oppoſition to their plea, and the peculiar guilt of ſuch oppoſition in your lordſhip.

I fancy, my lord, it will be readily acknowledged, that wherever emoluments and dignities are conferred by a ſociety upon any of its members, they are conferred upon them for ſome certain end; and that the greater the elevation, the greater evil will be

effected to the community, in caſe the perſons, enjoying ſuch diſtinctions, are guilty of a deſertion, or an unworthy proſtitution of their charge.

With a view of bringing this general poſition home to the caſe in queſtion, we will ſtate the nature of your office, as delineated by the laws and cuſtoms of this country; and next inquire, whether your conduct, in the inſtance alluded to, has been regulated by an attention to its proper duties?

Your lordſhips, I apprehend, have a double character to ſupport. The uſeful office of inſpecting into the morals, and canonical deportment, of the clergy in your reſpective dioceſes, is a truſt confided to your care. And you alſo enjoy ſeats in the upper houſe of parliament, as conſtitutional guardians of our proteſtant church.

With reſpect to your epiſcopal office, properly ſo called, animadverſion upon your general manner of diſcharging it, does not fall within the compaſs of my preſent purpoſe. I will conſider only the latter diviſion of your character, and endeavour to convince my readers, that, in oppoſing the requeſt of the

the petitioning clergy, you have been guilty of the baſeſt proſtitution of your truſt.

The goſpel, my lord, when treating of thoſe duties which it recommends to our obſervance, when declaring thoſe ſanctions by which it means to ſecure our obedience, encourages not by any means a reſpect of perſons. Vice is there declared to be the object of the divine diſpleaſure; and moral virtue is repreſented as invariably entitling the poſſeſſor to the almighty's favour, whether the characteriſtic marks of each be found in the lowly peaſant or the ſceptered king.

The aſſembled powers of this nation, thoſe powers, my lord, who thought it good to form the penal code, for the prevention of injury and outrage, by the infliction of temporal evil on the bold invader of our juſt and legal rights, have alſo thought proper to form an eſtabliſhment, for the proviſion of a ſet of miniſters, who ſhall honeſtly and faithfully declare the vengeance of heaven, as revealed in that goſpel, againſt all unrighteouſneſs of men; thus ſtrengthening the obligation of obedience to every wholeſome human inſtitution, by the additional and more tremen-

dous ſanctions, which are contained in the word of God.

If, therefore, a fearleſs unconcern in the article of danger, if an integrity ſuperior to every ſordid intereſt, ſhould animate the ſpirit of the perſon, who, from the ſeat of juſtice, applies the general ſanction of an human law to each particular tranſgreſſion, the ſame magnanimity of ſentiment ſhould be apparent in the preacher of the goſpel. He ſhould lay down the genuine doctrines of that goſpel, regardleſs of thoſe unmanly apprehenſions which may poſſibly ſuggeſt to him, that in declaring the whole counſel of God, he may utter truths offenſive to his brethren. He ſhould, with the ſpirit of the apoſtle diſcourſing before Felix, pluck away the veil which hides the odious form of vice from the offender's conſcience. Secure in his own unblemiſhed life and converſation, he ſhould aſſail her, baſking in the ſmile of kings; and, with honeſt indignation, ever riſing with the riſing profligacy of the people, ſhould direct the whole artillery of heaven againſt the portentous corruptions of a degenerate, diſſipated age.

But

But ſuch fidelity, ſuch conſtancy, and ſuch intrepidity, are in vain expected from dependent men.

The wiſdom of the conſtitution hath placed the interpreters of human laws above the ordinary influence of hope or fear; hath aſſigned to them an ample proviſion for the ſupport of that pomp and grandeur, which are a neceſſary appendage to their ſtation; and, hath forbidden them to obey the mighty monarch of the britiſh empire, although his ſignature ſhould be annexed to an injunction, which, in their apprehenſion, would obſtruct the courſe of equal juſtice.

The ſame wiſdom is apparent, my lord, in the great fundamental principles of our eſtabliſhed church. In the moſt ſolemn language, ſhe injoins her miniſters, when ſhe commiſſions them to preach the ordinances of righteouſneſs to their reſpective congregations, to utter nothing from their pulpit, except what "themſelves ſhall be perſuaded may be proved from the word of God:" and, convinced of the beneficial conſequences attendant upon a reſolute avowal of religious truth; and, at the ſame time, ſenſible

of the weakneſs of our common nature, our anceſtors endeavoured to ſecure the honeſty of each inferior preacher, by a proviſion and a patronage, which renders him independent of his flock; they ſecured the intereſts of the whole collective body of the clergy, againſt the more potent enmity of men in honourable ſtations, by the donation of ſeats in parliament to yourſelves.

Separated from the center of power, in conſequence of their attendance upon their reſpective charges, the inferior clergy would in vain remonſtrate againſt the impoſition of thoſe laws, which might reſtrain them in the exerciſe of their important duties, or diſcourage them in the proſecution of thoſe ſtudies, from whence their powers of convincing and perſuading are derived. To your lordſhips, therefore, under heaven, they muſt be underſtood to commend their cauſe, and the cauſe of that goſpel, which they are under ſuch ſolemn obligations to deliver pure and uncorrupted to their people. As chriſtians, they believe the miſſion of Jeſus to be divine; as opponents of the anti-chriſtian power, and the foul corruptions of the church

of

of Rome, they aſſert, that the ſcriptures of the old and new Teſtament contain thewhole of chriſtian faith and practice; and, the very nature of their office, excluſively of their righteous claim as proteſtants, requires, that they ſhould retain, in its unlimited extent, the right of interpreting thoſe ſcriptures for themſelves.

From the hiſtory of their religion they know that it was offenſive, on account of its liberal ſpirit, to the powers of this world, at its earlieſt inſtitution; and, they have reaſon to ſuppoſe, that its genuine doctrines will, in every ſucceeding age, be odious in the ſight of thoſe "who hate to be reformed;" and to whom, when engaged in a deliberate purpoſe of enſlaving their country, popery muſt be more than a merely inoffenſive ſyſtem. But, in the power and dignity appended to your ſtations, they confide. Above all ordinary temptations to deſert your charge, it is ſuppoſed, you will ever maintain the eſſential rights of proteſtants with becoming firmneſs; nor yield, even for a moment, though oppreſſed by numbers; but upon every favourable occaſion

ſion will unite, with heart and hand, in an animated proteſt in favour of the evangelical privileges of the engliſh church, although the whole combined power of the temporal lords and commons ſhould aſſail them, or refuſe to conſent to their reſtoration, when an injurious uſurpation of them is evidently diſcloſed.

Such is the conduct which the eſtabliſhed clergy of this kingdom have a juſt right and title to expect from the epiſcopal bench. If they do not, in general, declare this to your lordſhips, it is becauſe they are either infected with your manners, or influenced by the apprehenſions of your vengeance. The ſentiments of your petitioning brethren, you ſee in their application to the temporal powers in favour of their violated rights: rights, which are dear to them as friends to ſociety, and to the laſting intereſt of the individuals which compoſe it; and which ought to have been eſteemed doubly dear to you, as your honour, as well as your profeſſion, called upon you, in loudeſt language, to ſupport them.

CORNELIUS.

XXII.

XXII.

TO THE REV. DR. POWELL.

NOVEMBER 14, 1772.

SIR,

THE ſpirit of moderation which appears in your Charge*, entitles you to my reſpect. And I cannot help obſerving, that evident marks may be diſcerned of a philoſophical acumen, even while you are pleading in ſupport of the ſimplicity of our religion; whoſe genuine doctrines, as you juſtly obſerve, have too often been adulterated by philoſophical refinements.

But although I do moſt cordially embrace your opinion, with reſpect to the injury done to practical religion by metaphyſical ſpeculations, yet I do not perceive how the author of the Appeal, † or the petitioning clergy, can come within the ſphere of your reprehenſion.

No

* Dr. Powell's "charge delivered to the clergy of the archdeaconry of Colcheſter in June 1772."

† "An appeal to the ſerious and candid profeſſors of chriſtianity," by Dr. Prieſtley.

No man appears to me, more the friend of the unmixed goſpel than Dr. Prieſtley. And it is well known that the petitioners object to ſubſcription, not only on account of their perſuaſion that Chriſt is the ſole legiſlator in his kingdom, but alſo, becauſe the articles abound with metaphyſical ſubtilties, the figments of philoſophers; and becauſe, in the laboured form of their conſtruction, they are moſt unhappily oppoſed to the artleſs ſimplicity of the goſpel.

In all the religious tracts of Dr. Prieſtley, which I have had the pleaſure of peruſing, he ſeems conſtantly to aim at reſtoring to the word of God, that ſupremacy which it ſhould ever maintain above the inventions of men. And if, from the words of the late petition of the clergy, an idea can be formed of the nature of its requeſt, the gentlemen, who ſigned it, are certainly not among the number of thoſe, who are calling upon their brethren to amend their faith. Neither can they with juſtice be charged with a deſign of oppoſing thoſe doctrines, the truth of which you have ſo ingeniouſly defended. If the Son of God, be called GOD, in ſcripture,

ture, they have ſhewed themſelves willing, by the terms of their petition, to admit the truth of the propoſition, in its ſcriptural ſenſe. And when it is declared, that Jeſus is the propitiation for our ſins, they aſſent to the aſſertion, with a faith as determined as your own. But philoſophers have attempted to improve upon the religion of the goſpel; and evident marks of metaphyſical refinement are to be diſcerned in the articles. The petitioners, therefore, influenced by a laudable deſire of cutting off all occaſion of unedifying altercations, and proceeding upon principles, in every reſpect, concording with your own, conſiſtently demand, and, (let the ears of biſhops tingle as they read,) will continue to demand, a releaſe from the neceſſity of bearing teſtimony to a metaphyſical religion; to be delivered from the unwarrantable impoſition of ſubſcription to all humanly deviſed formularities of faith and doctrine.

HOSIUS.

XXIII. TO

XXIII.

TO THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

NOVEMBER 24, 1772.

MY LORD,

To thoſe who have not formed a juſt conception, or are not impreſſed with a proper ſenſe of the evil derived on ſociety, when perſons, elevated to offices and honourable diſtinctions, are guilty of a deſertion or proſtitution of their charge, the ſeverity of the expreſſions contained in my laſt letter, may ſuggeſt ſuſpicions, that my reprehenſion of your lordſhip's avowed oppoſition to the cauſe of the petitioning clergy, cannot be intirely aſcribed to a generous deteſtation of your unworthy conduct.

My own atteſtation, in favour of the purity of my intention, were my perſon known, would be deſerving of attention, in proportion to that degree of eſtimation I am held in by my neighbours. But as, relying on my printer's honour, I propoſe to continue, at

at leaſt for ſome time longer, in my obſcurity, any declaration of integrity, in your anonymous correſpondent, would be juſtly diſregarded.

I ſhall, however, make it my endeavour to convince my readers, and I hope it will be apparent by the conduct of my argument, that I am really actuated by the moſt honourable motives. I will not take the advantage of my concealed ſituation to wound your reputation, or the reputation of any of your brethren, in matters merely of a private nature; but if, in the moment of contemplating the melancholy conſequences of your crimes, I may happen to expreſs myſelf with a warmth of indignation, which may offend your ears, too much, alas! accuſtomed to the ſofter voice of adulation; be it your's to reflect, that reſentment is a virtue, when it owes its origin to a generous ardour of affection for the public good; and, that the moſt liberal indulgence of it does honour to the patriot, when he pours it forth, in ampleſt flood, upon the enemies of his country, and the violators of the common rights of men.

In

In all the letters addreſſed to your lordſhip's brethren, under the ſignature of the good centurion of the ſcriptures, I found my argument upon two uncontroverted facts. Whatever imputations are unconnected with your public character, have paſſed unnoticed by me. I mean not to render you the object of popular deteſtation, by arts, which every man of honour muſt abhor. I add myſelf to the number of thoſe, who have arraigned your public conduct. Vindicate that conduct, in your proper perſon. It is certainly your intereſt to attempt it; for, by the continuance of your ſilence, you will be underſtood to own our charge. If, upon an appeal to the judgment of the public, the crime imputed ſhall appear to be of a nature unimportant, or our accuſation unſupported by the proper evidence, you will have reaſon to rejoice in the ſeverity of our expreſſions. The infamy with which we endeavour to load your characters, will in that caſe juſtly mark our own.

Your open oppoſition, therefore, to a toleration, and your avowed hoſtility to the conſtitutional claim of many of your brethren of the

the eſtabliſhment, petitioning for a reſtoration of their evangelical rights and privileges, form the foundation of my charge.

But before I proceed, I muſt be indulged in a few words, upon the nature and origin of public truſt.

Society was inſtituted for the purpoſe of preventing the evil conſequences ariſing from the gratification of unreſtrained paſſion. Secure in the poſſeſſion of liberty, property, and life; we owe to equal laws, formed in conſequence of the ſocial compact, the additional enjoyment of thoſe numerous bleſſings, which the God of nature ſhowers down, with unſparing hand, as the rewards of active induſtry, in the various ranks and orders which we fill.

But, in the formation of equal laws, and in their execution alſo, the aſſiſtance of individuals is required; and, as the quantity of power neceſſarily communicated to the perſons intruſted, is the accumulated power of the many, greater evil will be effected in proportion to that ſtrength, unleſs the truſt be conſcientiouſly diſcharged, and an un-

wearied attention paid to its acknowledged end, by the perſons in whom it is repoſed.

As, therefore, the ſame temptations, which, in a ſtate of nature, induced each individual to invade his neighbour's right, ſubſiſt in a ſtate of ſociety, perhaps in fuller meaſure, on account of the inflamed paſſions of mankind, and the vaſt increaſe of imaginary wants; no power is meant to be intruſted, without ſome check to controul its exertion, when inimical to the end, for which it was beſtowed.

For this reaſon it is, that the people of England allow to their monarch the power of proclaiming war; but reſerve to themſelves the right of judging concerning its neceſſity, by the power of withholding the contributions proper for its ſupport.

And, on this foundation reſts that commonly received maxim in our engliſh laws, "the king can do no wrong."

But, the various powers of legiſlation, of execution, of controul, can never be ſo ſcientifically combined, as always effectually to guard againſt the poſſibility of the abuſe of public truſt. After all that man can do,

much

much muſt be left to the private honour, the patriot principle, and religious ſentiment of the perſon intruſted; and the ſecurity of oaths, ſo frequently enacted, ſhews, that, in numerous inſtances, the truſtee remains in effect, though not in contemplation of law, above the power of controul.

But public cenſure, public hatred, public deteſtation, public vengeance, are juſtly, and ſhould always be liberally their portion, who evidently betray their truſt; and thus repay with foul ingratitude the confidence repoſed in them by their country. While honour, of the moſt unſullied kind, and a reputation dear to each ſucceeding age, inveſts with radiant glory thoſe upright guardians, who, in every period of their miniſtration, have evidenced themſelves to be faithful in the execution of their charge.

The hiſtory of public calamities, is little more than the hiſtory of public confidence abuſed; and, therefore, I conclude, that no crime can poſſibly exceed the breach of public truſt, in matters of acknowledged importance; and, that infamy is the deſerved portion of all, who are guilty of ſuch crime.

In my laſt letter, I delineated the character of an engliſh biſhop; and, as inferences from the poſitions contained in that letter, and in thoſe to your lordſhip's brethren which preceded it, I aſſert, that, as every engliſh prelate is a conſtitutional guardian of the engliſh church, it is his proper duty, at all times, earneſtly to contend for the proteſtant privileges of that church, of which, one of the moſt important is, unqueſtionably, the independency of the word of God.

That, by conſenting to the impoſition of human formularies of faith and doctrine, or by not ſtrenuouſly contending for an abolition of ſubſcription to them, through fear of offending the temporal powers, he is guilty of a deſertion of his truſt.

That, if he declines the exertion of his legal ſtrength, where the courſe of truth is reſtrained, by the impoſition of ſubſcription to unwarantable additions to the goſpel, through the hopes of ſecular favour, he is guilty of a proſtitution of his truſt.

And laſtly, that if, with the biſhop of E —— r, he would inſinuate, that every prelate is the commiſſioned delegate of heaven, ſo

ſo as to hold his epiſcopal office not only by human, but divine appointment, he then, in conſequence of his debaſing the word intruſted to his care by God himſelf, or in conſequence even of conſenting to its debaſement, is guilty of ſuch horrible proſtitution, that it is not in the power of the moſt animated language to deſcribe his crime.

If you murmur, that this unconſtitutional and anti-chriſtian claim to an authority in controverſies of faith, is very innocently exerciſed in the engliſh church; I refer you to the declaration publicly made in the houſe of commons on the ſixth of February, that "many of the thirty-nine articles are contrary to ſcripture, and ſhocking to rational chriſtians;" an aſſertion, the juſtneſs of which many of your brethren have been known to acknowledge, in times of greater tranquillity; and which, from the beginning of the controverſy to the preſent hour, not one of them has had the confidence to deny.

If you maintain, that your truſt is not of ſuch importance as I ſeem to intimate, you are conſenting to your degradation. But

you know, my lord, full well; and hiſtory, in its diſplay of the innumerable evils derived on ſociety from the perverted religion of the people, bears witneſs to my aſſertion, that the guardianſhip of the religion of a country, is a charge, which, with reſpect to its importance, is almoſt on a level with the truſt of regal power. Indeed, I am ſorry to obſerve the public inattention to your conduct, for the general demeanor of yourſelf and brethren has, more than once, ſuggeſted to ſome perſons of political diſcernment, a ſuſpicion, that by the eſtabliſhment of eccleſiaſtical deſpotiſm in theſe kingdoms, you mean to prepare the way for the extinction of the civil liberties of England.

Your own particular ſtation, my lord, as biſhop of London, places you in a conſpicuous point of view; and your powers of promoting or diſſerving the cauſe of truth, by reaſon of your influence over the London clergy, and your vicinity to the court, are ſuperior to thoſe of the metropolitan himſelf. Fortunate for ſociety, fortunate for yourſelf, if you employ them in the advancement of the vital religion of the goſpel. But this

this is not your praiſe. Eminently above your peers, you are eſteemed by the diſſenters, as the advocate for intolerance; and by the petitioners, as the enemy of reformation. You openly avowed your reſolution to ſupport the acknowledged corruptions of religion, in the beginning of the controverſy concerning ſubſcriptions; and, in every period of that controverſy, your language and your actions have been invariably directed to that point. But when you declared your joy, that not a ſingle London clergyman was concerned in the aſſociation, at the ſame time that you gave your countenance to a notorious falſehood, you gloried in what ſhould have been eſteemed your ſhame. Highly ſhameful indeed it is in the London clergy, and in you their head, moſt ſtrenuouſly to oppoſe the means of further knowledge of the goſpel, in that place, where moſt its power is wanted; and, in the very center of diſſipation, to contend for the continuance of the fouleſt corruption in doctrine, under a full conviction, that ſuch corruptions are the immediate ſource of that infidel ſpirit, from which the fouleſt practice flows.

CORNELIUS.

XXIV.

TO THE RT. HONOURABLE LORD NORTH.

DECEMBER 22, 1772.

MY LORD,

I OBSERVE, from the Cambridge regiſter, that your lordſhip, upon the third of July 1769, teſtified, by the ſubſcription of your hand, that all and every of the thirty-nine articles were agreeable to the word of God.

I hope it will not be preſumptuous in a petitioner to requeſt that your lordſhip, when the queſtion of ſubſcription to the thirty-nine articles ſhall again become the ſubject of parliamentary debate, will declare to the houſe, whether, by ſuch a ſubſcription, you meant a declaration of unfeigned aſſent, given upon conviction, and on the word of a man of honour and veracity; or only ſubſcribed them as a mere form, which was neceſſary to be paſſed through, before you received your degree of doctor of laws, from the ſenate of Cambridge.

If

If you ſubſcribed them as a man of honour, convinced of their intire conformity to the words of holy writ, the nation will expect from you, a demonſtration of their truth. Deſpotic lord, in things ſpiritual and temporal, your will is law to this kingdom; and it is known that you poſſeſs the power of binding and looſing, in a manner as abſolute as was ever claimed by the hoary vicar at Rome: yet, even he was wont, in queſtions of moment, to deſcend to argument, and previouſly to demonſtrate the truth of whatever he eſtabliſhed by his infallible decree.

If occupied in matters of ſtate, you ſubſcribed them in the year 1769, merely as a matter of form, your lordſhip's example may be pleaded as an argument for the abolition of ſubſcription, in every inſtance whatſoever. The phyſician, the lawyer, and the muſician, may declare that they alſo are too much occupied in their reſpective profeſſions, to examine into the congruity of the ſaid articles with ſcripture; and ſome of the moſt learned of the clergy have repeatedly declared, that in very many inſtances they are drawn up in direct oppoſition to the word of God.

An

An inference follows, of an important kind; as a man of honour you muſt employ your power in aboliſhing all ſubſcription. For a form of aſſent, either given without a meaning, or with a meaning, contrary to the plain intention of law, muſt tend to the deſtruction of good faith, and open a door to ſuch prevarication and deceit, as even the ſultan of Turkey would, if poſſible, baniſh from his people.

NASICA.

XXV.

FEBRUARY 27, 1773.

THE circumſtances of the preſent times, depraved beyond the example of all former ages, will, I truſt, plead my excuſe for recommending to the peruſal of our engliſh clergy, an extract from an admirable little pamphlet, printed in 1758, and entitled "Friendly admonitions to the inhabitants of Great Britain, &c. by Britannicus;" in which, the ſaid clergy are addreſſed in the following terms.

"I cannot

"I cannot help obſerving, gentlemen, that a great part of the irreligion and infidelity of the age we live in, is chargeable upon you. I heartily wiſh, for the honour of your order, that I was ſingular in this opinion; but, as I am far from being ſo, it cannot, at leaſt it ought not, to be deemed an unfriendly office, to lay before you ſome of the reaſons which ſupport this opinion, that if you are unjuſtly blamed, you may have an opportunity of vindicating yourſelves. In the firſt place then, your ſolemnly ſubſcribing articles, which it is notorious you do not believe, and your declaring publicly, in the preſence of the great ſearcher of hearts, your unfeigned aſſent and conſent to forms in divine worſhip, which it is well known you diſapprove of, is one of the principal cauſes of infidelity and ſcepticiſm. The articles of religion, to which you ſolemnly ſubſcribe, are calviniſtic. Now, I preſume it will not be denied, that the generality of you have embraced the unitarian and arminian ſchemes. What then muſt every ſober inquirer think of perſons in the unitarian ſcheme, when they ſtand before God, and call upon him to witneſs

witneſs to their ſincerity, when they ſubſcribe articles which ſtrongly aſſert, that, "there is but one living and true God; that, in the unity of the godhead, there be three perſons of one ſubſtance, power, and eternity, the father, ſon, and holy ghoſt; that, the ſon is the very and eternal God, of one ſubſtance with the father; and that, the creed of St. Athanaſius ought thoroughly to be received and believed, for it may be proved by moſt certain warrant of holy ſcripture?" muſt he not look upon them as vile diſſemblers, as groſs hypocrites, as guilty of the moſt ſhameful prevarication? With what face, with what proſpect of ſucceſs, can ſuch clergymen preach up the great doctrines of ſincerity and ſimplicity of heart, which are ſo ſtrongly recommended and enforced by the great captain of our ſalvation? Inſtead of being patterns of uncorrupted faith and integrity, are they not public examples of inſincerity? Do not ſuch perſons deſerve the contempt and indignation of ſociety? And muſt they not be conſidered as a burthen, a heavy and uſeleſs burthen, upon the nation? Is it poſſible to believe them in earneſt,

earneſt, when they recommend chriſtianity, and ſet forth the dangers of unbelief and hypocriſy? Or, is it at all ſurpriſing, that the profeſſion of chriſtianity ſhould be looked upon, by many, as mere artifice and pretence?

" There are, I am very ſenſible, many jeſuitical ſhifts and quibbles, many forced explications, by which clergymen endeavour to palliate their conduct, in regard to ſubſcriptions; but they are all ſuch as have a direct tendency to defeat the uſe of language among men, and ſuch as any man, who has a regard to his honour and reputation, would be aſhamed to make uſe of, in the tranſactions of commercial or civil life; or if he did, would conſign himſelf over to infamy and reproach.

" I would aſk you, gentlemen; I would particularly aſk the governors of our church, in the ſpirit of meekneſs and ſerioufneſs, whether impoſing on miniſters, ſubſcriptions to explanatory articles of faith, has ever been of any real ſervice to chriſtianity, to the intereſts of truth and ſincerity; or whether it has not been a fruitful ſource of contention

and

and animoſity; of blind zeal, uncharitableneſs, and party ſpirit; a principal obſtruction to peace and unity; a ſnare to conſcience; an occaſion of inſincerity and equivocation; a juſt cauſe to papiſts of reproaching proteſtant churches with inconſiſtent and contradictory opinions and practices? I would aſk, whether it has ever proved, or whether it is poſſible, in the nature of the thing, it ſhould prove the leaſt guard againſt error, or the leaſt ſecurity to truth? Once more, I would aſk, gentlemen, whether your ſubſcribing articles, which, it is certain, many of the wiſeſt and beſt of you do not believe, muſt not neceſſarily and unavoidably create ſtrong prejudices againſt you, and prevent your uſefulneſs? It certainly muſt; and is, undoubtedly, one principal reaſon of that contempt, under which your order has ſo juſtly fallen, and under which it muſt eternally remain, if the ſtumbling-block is not removed, and greater evidence given, that you really are what you profeſs to be."

So far my author; and to his doctrine I readily ſubſcribe,

LÆLIUS.

XXVI. Au-

XXVI.

AUGUST 31, 1773.

IN the preſent controverſy concerning ſubſcription, it is ſtrongly inſiſted upon, by the adverſaries to the reaſonable claim of the clerical remonſtrants, that the granting of their prayer would be attended with an utter ſubverſion of our eccleſiaſtical conſtitution. Now, if the eccleſiaſtical conſtitution be, in any meaſure, connected with our civil conſtitution, this is an aſſertion, the truth of which, I can by no means admit. On the contrary, I maintain, that the requiſition of this ſubſcription, excluſively of its contrariety to the genius of a proteſtant community, is an uſurpation in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, as well as a violation of thoſe rights, which ought ever to be eſteemed moſt dear, by a free and enlightened people.

It is generally acknowledged by our lawyers and antiquaries, that the firſt advowſons, in this country, were purely donative,

i. e.

i. e. required not the aid of epiſcopal inſtitution to form an indefeſible title in the incumbent. It frequently indeed happened, that the perſon, who was the object of the donation, was a layman; and, in ſuch a caſe, he was previouſly preſented to the biſhop for ordination. But, when he was already in orders, the living was uſually veſted in him, by the ſole donation of the patron.

In proceſs of time, the pope and his biſhops claimed and exerciſed the right of inſtitution, when the perſon preſented was already a clerk; and, although they could not gain to themſelves the power of collation, in every inſtance, yet they ſucceeded too well, in making inſtitution generally neceſſary; and thus, in part, effected their purpoſe of eſtabliſhing, in their own order, a concurrent title to every ſpecies of ſpiritual inveſtiture.

The reſulting power of rejecting a perſon canonically ordained, after the patron had nominated him to fill the vacant benefice, could ſcarcely be exerciſed without the moſt manifeſt injury to the patron, eſpecially

ally at the commencement of this practice. The lord of a manor builds a church for the accommodation of his tenants, and his own immediate dependants; he endowes it with glebe and tythes, and has, therefore, a common right of nominating a perſon to officiate in that church, provided he be taken from that number of men who already are canonically ordained. From a principle of common right, he might, indeed, demand more; but I will not found my argument upon other than indiſputable grounds.

The right of donation, thus qualified, was, indiſputably, the right of the lay patrons in almoſt all the manors or pariſhes in England. And whatever laws and regulations the eccleſiaſtics may exact, relative to the terms of admiſſion into their own body, yet, if it was formerly the cuſtom of this country for the patron to nominate to the living, and for the nominee to enter upon the poſſeſſion, without having recourſe to the biſhop for preſentation or induction, the requiſition of the forms of inſtitution is an innovation; and, although it now has the ſanction of law, yet, it is to be referred

to thoſe incroachments of the clerical corporation, upon the rights of the people, from which all the miſeries of former times directly flowed, and to which we are, in a great meaſure, to impute the infidelity, and profligacy of the preſent age.

The requiſition of ſubſcription to the thirty-nine articles, i. e. to a precarious explanation of ſcripture, drawn up by the clerical community, in the formation of which their own aggrandiſement would naturally be a great object, is one of thoſe forms required in ſpiritual inveſtiture, which makes the claim to it a grievance to the people, inaſmuch as it is a further limitation of the patron's undoubted right to nominate any perſon, canonically ordained, to the enjoyment of the vacant benefice: and, therefore, if we were even to allow, that the clerical community had a right to inſiſt upon ſubſcription to the articles before admiſſion into their order, yet, the ſubſequent requiſition of it is unqueſtionably an uſurpation, however warranted by law; and ſo, without doubt, it would be eſteemed in the epiſcopal churches of North America,

America, where ſubſcription is not reiterated upon admiſſion to a benefice, as it always is on this ſide the Atlantic.

But, the clergy have not a right to make ſubſcription a requiſite to admiſſion into their own order; nor can parliament veſt them with this power, without conſenting to the incroachment, and doing a real injury to the patron of the church.

It is undoubtedly right, that the perſon ordained, ſhould be properly qualified for the diſcharge of his important duties. But any other reſtriction, or mode of inquiry, which has not ſuch qualification for its object, is a real injury to the patron of the benefice, as, without due reaſon, it circumſcribes him in his choice.

Let the biſhop then retain the power of inquiring into the literary and moral qualifications of the perſon applying for ordination; let him have the power of rejecting the candidate, if found deficient in either, as at preſent. Let the ſtate interpoſe, and, previouſly to induction of a benefice, let the perſon preſented give evidence, of his loyalty, and of his abhorrence of the im-

poſing ſpirit of the romiſh church; but, as a declaration of aſſent to any human interpretation of ſcripture whatever, cannot poſſibly be a proof of the aſpirant's knowledge, or integrity, the requiſition of it ought to be oppoſed by the laity of England, as an infringement of the ſacred rights of conſcience, and a limitation of the patron's power of nominating a fit and worthy perſon to officiate in that church, which his anceſtors founded, and out of their private patrimony endowed.

POLYBIUS.

XXVII.

TO THE RIGHT REV. THE BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH. *

DECEMBER 9, 1773.

MY LORD,

As you are, confeſſedly, one of the moſt vehement oppoſers both of the diſſenting and the clerical petitioners, in their attempt to

[* Dr. John Hinchliffe.]

to remove the unworthy yoke of ſubſcription to human formularies of faith and doctrine, from the necks of engliſh proteſtants; and, as it is, in general, imagined, that your oppoſition proceeds, in a great meaſure, from your want of information with reſpect to the proper grounds and reaſons of their claim; permit me to attempt to ſet you right in one particular, of no ſmall importance, in the preſent controverſy. If your lordſhip ſhall, by your ſubſequent conduct, convince me that my words have had ſome influence upon your judgment, I will proceed to other matter, until, of a warm opponent of the much injured remonſtrants, I ſhall have converted you into a patron of religious liberty, and a friend to chriſtian charity and peace

Your lordſhip, it ſeems, has adopted an opinion, that thoſe perſons who deny the doctrine of the trinity, and the doctrine of the atonement, as explained by the divines of the church of England, cannot, with propriety, be termed "chriſtians;" and, therefore, you maintain, that a

clergyman's acknowledgment of the divine authority of the ſcriptures, is an inſufficient teſt of orthodoxy; and that no perſon ſhould be admitted into the church, who will not publicly teſtify his firm perſuaſion of the propriety of our church's explanations, upon points eſteemed, by your lordſhip, to be fundamental in religion. Strange deluſion! Is it not ſufficient for the candidate to declare that, to the beſt of his underſtanding, he thinks with Jeſus, upon the perſon of Jeſus? and, that he acknowledges him to be the ſaviour and redeemer of mankind, in the full ſenſe and meaning of the ſcriptures? Your lordſhip ſurely ſhould acknowledge thoſe perſons to be chriſtians, whom St. Paul acknowledges to be of the number of the ſaved; and without imitating a late declaimer in St. Mary's church, who told his audience that "in the bowels" of the text I am going to tranſcribe for your peruſal, he had found the trinitarian ſyſtem, your lordſhip ſhould reſt ſatisfied with the plain and ſimple declaration it contains.

If your lordſhip will pleaſe to turn to the tenth chapter of St. Paul's epiſtle to the Romans,

Romans, and the ninth verſe, you there will find, that " if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thy heart, that God hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved. For with the heart, man believeth unto righteouſneſs; and with the mouth, confeſſion is made unto ſalvation." If your lordſhip ſhall aſk, what is to be underſtood by this confeſſion; I reply, in the words of the eunuch unto Philip, words which entitled him to immediate baptiſm, and conſequently to the name of chriſtian, " I believe Jeſus to be the ſon of God." If you further aſk, what I mean by the expreſſion, " ſon of God;" I anſwer, that I mean by it, the ſame which ſcripture meaneth; and your lordſhip cannot, with decency, be ſuppoſed to mean more. If my interpretation of this expreſſion, collected from comparing ſcripture with ſcripture, ſhould differ from your lordſhip's, I nevertheleſs have an indiſputable right to the appellation of a chriſtian, while I profeſs that I believe this article of religion, in that ſenſe, which appears to me to be agreeable to ſcripture. If your lordſhip ſhall deny that I am

a chriſtian, unleſs I ſubſcribe to your lordſhip's, or the church's explanation of the words in queſtion; I challenge you to ſhew me the difference, between your lordſhip's claim to authority in controverſies of faith, and the extravagant pretenſions of the romiſh church to abſolute dominion over the reaſon and the conſciences of men.

With reſpect to the ſecond article, eſteemed by your lordſhip to be fundamental in religion, viz. the doctrine of the atonement, as explained in the articles of our church; I ſhall obſerve, that, profeſſing a belief in ſcripture, and ſubſcribing to its authority, I confeſs alſo with St. Paul, in the third verſe of the fifteenth chapter of his firſt epiſtle to the Corinthians, "that Chriſt died for our ſins according to the ſcriptures." If you aſk in what manner his death availed us, i. e. in what ſenſe I underſtand theſe words; I anſwer, in their ſcripture ſenſe; and, the ſenſe of ſcripture, I faithfully labour to explore to the beſt of my capacity and power. If your lordſhip ſhould require more than this confeſſion, and ſhould inſiſt, before you will acknowledge me to be a chriſtian, upon a ſub-

a ſubſcribed teſtimony to your opinion, or the opinion of the church, I muſt ſay, that whatever your lordſhip may affect, you are a papiſt in your heart; and that your deſign of domination over conſcience, is as evident, as if you had expreſſed yourſelf, in the moſt authoritative language of him, whoſe ſeat is on the ſeven hills.

To reſtore the ſcriptures to their due ſupremacy, above the precarious comments and doubtful interpretations of fallible men, is the end and aim of the aſſociation, which viſibly gives you ſo much diſquiet. If your lordſhip hath formed any ſyſtem of faith and doctrine reſpecting the trinity, and the atonement, which you think to be the doctrine of ſcripture; the petitioners have no deſire to diſturb your peace, or the peace of the church, with endleſs controverſies upon the ſubject. They are diſpoſed to permit to you, and to every other chriſtian, the free and unmoleſted enjoyment of your opinions, with reſpect to the real import of any expreſſion, in the ſacred writings. They remonſtrate, and, my lord, although the oppoſition of your brethren ſhould be ſeven-fold

increaſed,

increaſed, they will continue to remonſtrate, againſt the requiſition of ſubſcription to human interpretations of ſcripture in a proteſtant church. And if, by the wiſdom of the legiſlature, they ſhall be releaſed from the neceſſity of declaring their faith in the words of a Cranmer, a Ridley, or a Parker, they will then have obtained the ultimatum of their deſires; and, will leave to your lordſhip, and every other chriſtian, unlimited and unreſtrained, the ſame power of interpreting ſcripture, which, as members of a church that calls itſelf proteſtant, they claim themſelves.

HOSIUS.

XXVIII.

TO THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

DECEMBER 9, 1773.

MY LORDS,

WITHOUT any preamble, I propoſe the following queries to your conſideration.

1. Is it not a natural inference from the terms, in which ſubſcription to the thirty-nine

nine articles is required, that the candidate ſhould, in his heart, be perſuaded that all and every of the ſaid articles are agreeable to the word of God?

2. Is it poſſible, that the expreſſion of ſuch perſuaſion can be ſincere, unleſs the ſubſcription be preceded by a careful compariſon of the doctrine of the articles, with the truths contained in holy writ?

3. For inſtance, is it not aſſerted in the athanaſian creed, (to the truth of which every candidate for orders muſt ſubſcribe,) that all who admit not the trinitarian ſcheme, as there delineated, ſhall, "without a doubt, periſh everlaſtingly?"

4. Is it, therefore, decent, that an article of ſuch importance, ſhould be ſubſcribed without any previous acquaintance with the word of God?

5. Is it not the indiſpenſable duty of your lordſhips, whom the law hath commiſſioned to take the ſubſcription of the clergy, to inquire, with the moſt conſcientious ſtrictneſs, whether the perſons who apply to you for ordination, have made the moſt material points of doctrine contained in

in theſe articles, the ſubject of their ſtudious attention?

6. Is there a ſingle lecture read upon the articles, in the univerſity of Cambridge?

7. Are not lectures alſo upon the word of God, neglected by many of the tutors, and diſcouraged by the heads of houſes in Cambridge, upon the idea, that the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, at this time, would be particularly dangerous to the church?

8. Is it not a fact, that to the machinations of a junto of your order, Mr. Croft owes his ſeat as member for the univerſity?

9. And, would not an equal exertion of your intereſt have affected the eſtabliſhment of lectures upon the word of God, in every college in Cambridge?

A LOLLARD.

XXIX.

DECEMBER 18, 1773.

SIR,

IT has often been aſſerted, and very ably proved, that myſteries are the bane of true religion; that they teach us to idolize our own

own vain imaginations; and, induce us to neglect all attention to thoſe important points of revelation, from which each ſubſtantial duty flows. The following lines, which exhibit the ſentiments of a very honeſt layman, on this ſubject, paint the neceſſity of our exerting ourſelves in the cauſe of religious liberty, in ſuch ſtrong colours, that I cannot help tranſcribing them for your reader's uſe, earneſtly wiſhing that the right reverend biſhops may receive improvement from the peruſal.

MARMONTEL.

" Whatever is above the reach of human underſtanding, the human mind is not concerned to know: whatever is contrary to reaſon, a rational creature cannot believe. What good uſe myſteries in religion can be turned to, my creator has not given me power to comprehend: the ill uſes that every chriſtian country has, in its turn, experienced from them, written as they are in characters of blood, cruelty, rapine, and oppreſſion, he who runs may read. To ambitious crafty churchmen, they have ever been of ſingular uſe; the ſame as his ſteel is to a butcher,

butcher, or his military collectors to the hero of Germany: but, ſo far as the ſalvation of man is affected by them, they are, and muſt be, impediments. They conſtantly divert mens' attention from the weighty matters of the law; and, zealous advocates for them have always preferred them to it.

"There are, I doubt not, a million of people, in this iſland, capable of thinking juſtly on this ſubject. I would remind them, how favourable the preſent opportunity is to exert the power, and aſſert the right of doing ſo. If they ſet about it in earneſt, the conſtitution of our national church, may be made as rational, as the conſtitution of our civil government.

"Men of weight and adequate abilities have already taken the lead: our part is only to give the countenance of numbers. A general election is near at hand. In the mean time, let us make ready to aſſert our religious, as well as civil right; and be careful not one moment to forget, that religious and civil liberty generally go hand in hand."

EVERY

EVERY MAN HIS OWN PRIEST.

A SERIES OF PAPERS.

EVERY MAN HIS OWN PRIEST.

I.

MARCH 14, 1772.

THE moſt important of thoſe objects which demand our care and foreſight, are, unqueſtionably, the proſperity of our temporal concerns, the health of our bodies, and the ſalvation of our ſouls. Let us inquire a little into the uſual methods of preſerving and ſecuring each. Some hints may be ſuggeſted, in ſuch an inquiry, which, properly improved, may conduce to the conſolation of human life.

With reſpect to our worldly eſtate, without controverſy, the multiplicity of laws ariſing from the almoſt infinite variety of circumſtances in which we may be placed, muſt frequently compel us, who enjoy the ſweets of liberty ſecured by law, to have recourſe to thoſe who have employed their earlieſt years in the ſtudy, and their more advanced age in the practice, of that ſyſtem

of juriſprudence, which defines to each their right, and ſecures to us the undiſturbed enjoyment of it.

The caſe is much the ſame with reſpect to bodily health. The frame of man is liable to innumerable caſualties and frailties, which require the healing hand. Imagination cannot furniſh a more lamentable ſpectacle of woe, than what would diſcloſe itſelf in the almoſt deſerted village, as well as too populous town, were the practice of the phyſician to be ſuſpended, even for a ſingle day, by an arbitrary act of ſtate.

But, when the knowledge of our great creator, and our duty to him is rendered imperceptible, through the prevailing influence of worldly cares; when every virtue, both ſocial and divine, is eradicated from the breaſt; when ſtorms of paſſion deſolate the ſoul, we want that proper ſenſe of our calamity which ſhould induce us to apply for ſuccour; and, our ſpiritual director too often wants the power, as well as diſpoſition, to adminiſter relief.

Yet, as virtue is eſſentially neceſſary to the ſupport of ſociety, and religion to the ſupport

port of virtue, an order of men ſhould be found, in every well conſtituted community, whoſe proper and peculiar office it ſhould be, to inſtruct the ignorant in the will of God, and to warn the careleſs and profane, by ſtrong and affecting repreſentations of that awful vengeance, which will hereafter be inflicted upon every vice and impiety of man.

And, if chriſtianity be the eſtabliſhed religion of the country, ſuch order of men ſhould be encouraged, by proper emoluments and dignities, to unfold and to inculcate the genuine doctrines of the goſpel.

However, were the office of the teacher executed with the utmoſt fidelity and diligence, many of our ſpiritual evils would elude his care; and many mental diſorders would be found, for which ourſelves alone can adminiſter the cure.

But, if this order, conſtituted by the ſtate, and thus encouraged by immunities and emoluments to attend the ſacred charge, ſhould corrupt the goſpel; and, in conſequence of ſuch perfidious dealing, be conſidered, by all judicious and diſpaſſionate men, as, at beſt, an uſeleſs burden to the

community, the obligation of the laity to conſult their own internal intereſt, by an earneſt and ſteady attention to the ſaving words of truth, ſo long concealed from them by the craft and cunning of a deſigning and deſpotic prieſthood, would, in ſuch a ſeaſon, be moſt urgent; and, the neglect of ſo neceſſary a duty would furniſh a moſt alarming proof of the utter profligacy and degeneracy of the times.

That ſeaſon is at laſt arrived. The ſacred fountains of truth, polluted by the foul and noiſome mixture of human inventions, now pour forth an empoiſoned ſtream; and the munificence of our anceſtors to the church, which was intended as an offering of gratitude, for her ſuppoſed fidelity and care, in diſpenſing the pure and perfect word of God, ſerves but to ſpread the contagion of corrupted doctrine, and unholy practice, through every rank and order of the ſtate.

II.

APRIL 21, 1772.

I MUST begin this number ſomewhat in the ſtile of a confeſſion of faith, otherwiſe I foreſee, I ſhall not only give great offence to many well-diſpoſed chriſtians, but ſhall alſo be ſuſpected of holding opinions, and of harbouring intentions, of the moſt dangerous import to goſpel piety and public peace.

In the firſt place, then, when I recommend it to every man, in ſome meaſure, to exerciſe the office of the prieſt, I would not be underſtood to mean, that the function, as defined by our laws, is itſelf unneceſſary; or has, to all intents and purpoſes, become uſeleſs, through the ambitious practices or profligate principles of the perſons who diſcharge it: on the contrary, that form of eccleſiaſtical polity, which is eſtabliſhed in theſe kingdoms by authority of parliament, is that very form, which, if armed with the powers of the legiſlature, I would inſtitute myſelf; and the neceſſity of an eſtabliſhed

form of public worſhip, (though certainly of a more comprehenſive nature than the preſent,) as well as of an order of men, whoſe ſole employment it ſhould be to officiate in things pertaining to that worſhip, appears to me equally clear, whether I conſider the ſubject as a politician or as a divine. Nor would I have it ſuppoſed, that I mean to involve, in one common charge, the humble paſtor and the lordly prelate, the laborious preacher and the court divine. I myſelf am acquainted with ſome worthy paſtors, who contend for "the truth as it is in Jeſus," and, in their lives and converſations, are examples to their flock: nor would I poſitively aſſert, that every biſhop is either a Wolſey, a Bonner, or a Laud. But, when I charge the generality of the prieſthood with endeavouring, by force or fraud, to prolong the reign of ignorance and ſuperſtition in this land; upon full conviction, I aſſert the truth. When I charge the biſhops, in particular, with foreclоſing every avenue to religious knowledge; when I charge them, with proſtituting their authority and influence to the worſt of purpoſes, viz. to the

ſupport

ſupport of a tory adminiſtration, in order that their own papiſtical pretences to a deſpotic power in matters of faith, may be ſupported in their turn; upon the ſtrongeſt evidence I aſſert the truth. And, when I charge them, with engaging each mercenary ſcribbler, in the defence of that cauſe, which they cannot, dare not defend, by their own reaſon and argument; when I charge them, with oppoſing, as biſhops, thoſe meaſures which they approved and patronized in humbler ſtations, their own conſciences will bear me teſtimony that I aſſert the truth.

I will cloſe this letter with a few extracts from an author, who ſeems to maintain the ſame idea of the ſource of our religious abuſes with myſelf.

" The prieſts have exalted themſelves above the people, as much as the pope above all princes and biſhops. That they might keep the laity at the greater diſtance, they have doubly abuſed them; firſt, by multiplying and entangling the doctrines of faith, and then, by with-holding the light that ſhould clear them; at the ſame time, ſurfeiting them with a glut of doctrines, and ſtarving

them with a famine of the bread of life: ſo the goſpel is to them both kinds of wilderneſs; bare as the ſands of Afric, without path or landmark, for want of ſcripture; yet, thick-wooded as the hills of Zeilan, (whoſe buſhes none can creep through,) by multitude of doctrines.

"Staniſlaus Onicharius ſaith, that a common prieſt is as much better than a king, as a man is better than a beaſt; yea, further, that as far as God almighty doth excel a prieſt, ſo much doth a prieſt excel a king.

"Laymen (ſaith Gaſpar Schioppius,) are aſſes, mules, or horſes; the romaniſt a tame aſs; the heretic a wild one. Catholic kings are the leading aſſes with bells.

"We have a ſaying, that if the horſe knew his own ſtrength he would not endure ſuch uſage: but what hindereth us from knowing the ſtrength of our own minds? We have the ſame ſcripture that our maſters have, and the ſame faculties by which to underſtand it; and we may have more certainty of our own ſincerity, than we can have of theirs. Why then ſhould we rather take

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our religion from other mens' traditions than from our own judgments?

" If we can have the boldneſs to believe, that nothing can be matter of ſaving faith, but what the author and finiſher of our faith made ſo; and that the ſcripture hath faithfully informed us of what he ſaid in that great point; we may ſoon know ourſelves to be no leſs, to all deſirable purpoſes, infallible, than the pope pretendeth to be. And, if we ſhake off the loads which our luſts impoſe, as well as thoſe which the prieſts impoſe, we may enjoy that true liberty, whereof our lord ſaith, " if the Son make you free, you ſhall be free indeed."

III.

MAY 23, 1772.

HAVING made all thoſe declarations, which I judged to be neceſſary for my ſecurity, againſt the ſuſpicions and ſurmiſes of thoſe, who would make up, by falſe imputations, what they want in argument; I now enter more immediately, upon my plan of holding

holding forth, to the obſervation of a judicious people, the errors in our religious eſtabliſhment, which the bigotry and knavery of intereſted men have introduced; in order that they may perceive the ſtrange abſurdities and odious tendencies of thoſe doctrines, which are contained in the religion of the "prieſt," and, be thereby induced to employ themſelves, more ſeduloufly, in the inveſtigation of thoſe truly venerable and important doctrines, which are to be found in the religion of the goſpel.

Every corporation of men, which has been eſtabliſhed for any length of time, has certain maxims by which it is governed, flowing from the end and deſign of the incorporation, as well as from thoſe ſtatutes and bye-laws, which appear in its written inſtitutions.

One maxim, which will be found to predominate, more or leſs, in the minds of individuals in every corporation, conſiſts, in an overweening opinion and extravagant zeal for the intereſt of that body, to which, as it is often expreſſed, they "have the honour to belong."

Examples

Examples of this corporation-ſpirit may be every day obſerved in the army, the Eaſt-India company, the ſociety of jeſuits, the romiſh, the gallican, the engliſh, or any other church.

But the quantity of actual injury which may poſſibly be done to individuals, in their perſons, their properties, their religion, or their morals, in ſuch aſſociations, (which yet are neceſſary, and, under proper regulations, highly beneficial to the great ſociety of which they are a part,) may be eſtimated from inſpection into the inſtitution of the corporation.

Thus, when, to the aſtoniſhed world, was unfolded the inſtitute of the jeſuit fraternity, men were no longer amazed at the conduct of the individuals, who compoſed it.

And, when the maxims of the Eaſt-India company ſhall be brought to light, by a virtuous and ſpirited committee of the houſe of commons, we ſhall be able to account for thoſe frauds, and cruelties, which now appear as portentous phænomena in the moral world, and are not to be deduced from any

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of the known inclinations, or diſtortions, of the human mind.

That a villain, apparently fit for the gallows or plantations, ſhould, after having been in the army a few years, afford a ſpecimen of regularity and decency of deportment, worthy of the imitation of the divine, appears ſtrange and unaccountable to thoſe, who, unconnected with military men, have never peruſed the " articles of war."

And, that the clergy of this country ſhould be, in general, the enemies of truth, the favourers of civil deſpotiſm, adviſers of perſecution in every ſhape and form, and, frequently, in their lives and converſations, guilty of practices, the bare recital of which would corrupt the morals of the unenlightened ſavage, muſt appear ſurpriſing to all, who, for want of converſing with clerical men, have not conſidered that ſyſtem of deſpotiſm and immorality, contained in the articles of the engliſh church; which its miniſters now would fain have conſidered as " articles of peace."

It ſhall be my employment, in ſome future papers, to ſelect a few of theſe articles, and

and deſcribe the origin, intention, and natural conſequences of them, for the entertainment and inſtruction of the reader: only promiſing, as a proper hint for reformation, that when the laws of any corporation, or ſpirit begotten by theſe laws, ſhall become noxious or oppreſſive to the ſubject, a right is certainly veſted in the britiſh houſe of commons to viſit the corporation, and to reform its laws.

The article which I ſhall begin to conſider at this time, is the eighth. It is expreſſed in the following terms:

" The three creeds, viz. the Nice creed, Athanaſius's creed, and that which is commonly called the apoſtles' creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed, for they may be proved by moſt certain warrants of holy ſcripture."

If this article ſpeaks the truth, I will venture to declare, that holy ſcripture is not the voice of God.

But, come forward, Athanaſius! let us peruſe thy impious, thy abominable creed. Let us expoſe, to the indignation of all mankind, that intolerant ſpirit, which induced thee

thee to indite it, (if indeed thou didſt indite it;) and, if we cannot prevail with our countrymen to riſe as one man, with a determined reſolution, for ever to aboliſh ſuch a reproach to human nature, at leaſt we will indulge ourſelves, in the miſerable conſolation of lamenting, that a ſummary of faith ſo monſtrouſly abſurd, ſo contradictory to reaſon and to itſelf, ſo deſtructive of charity and peace, ſo diſhonourable to our ideas of the almighty, ſo oppoſite to the doctrine and example of the meek and lowly Jeſus, could ever find a place in a chriſtian form of worſhip, could ever be countenanced by a proteſtant prelate, could ever be eſtabliſhed by an engliſh act of parliament, and thus, be permitted to tranſmit its peſtilential virus, into the maxims and morals of each ſucceeding generation.

IV.

OCTOBER 3, 1772.

THE right of individuals to judge and act for themſelves, in matters of a religious nature, is a right of ſo important a kind, that no zeal can be too fervent, which aims at its eſtabliſhment; and no indignation can be too ſevere, which is manifeſted againſt thoſe who would impiouſly invade it.

I reſign to the magiſtrate the power of avenging thoſe wrongs which I ſuffer from men of like paſſions with myſelf; and my liberty, my trueſt liberty, conſiſts in my ſubmiſſion to thoſe equal laws, which, without reſpect of perſons, guard my property, my reputation, and my life.

But, when I direct my view to future happineſs, I look not to the perſon of the magiſtrate for information and advice: he is a weak, frail, ignorant, erring mortal, like myſelf. I therefore, in ſuch a caſe, look up to the tremendous majeſty of heaven,

and

and humbly confide in that word, which the almighty hath thought proper to reveal. I ſearch with my own eyes, and with my own underſtanding, and with earneſt ſolicitude for that truth, in the diſcovery of which, I am ſo immediately concerned: and, as the power of the greateſt monarch upon earth, cannot deliver me from the dominion of the grave, I will, in religious matters, bow to him alone, who alone is lord of life and death.

But, if the voice of the magiſtrate is unable to direct my choice, I am under ſtill leſs obligation to obey the prieſt, who is the creature of his power. The prieſt is intereſted in my error; for if I conſult my own reaſon in religion, I have the leſs occaſion for his ſervice. He will tell me that religion, is myſterious; he will depreciate the powers of reaſon, in order that he may lead me captive to his will; he will confound my underſtanding, in order that he may eſtabliſh his empire over my conſcience; he will inculcate the moſt abſurd and ſenſeleſs ſuperſtitions, becauſe he knows that

that the riches of his order will increaſe in proportion to the ignorance of the people; and virtue, honour, and public ſpirit, will be treated by him with contempt, becauſe they ennoble the mind of man, and teach it to look down, with a generous indignation, on the artifices of thoſe, who have always been indefatigable in their endeavours to debaſe it.

For this reaſon it is, that the creed of Athanaſius, which, in my laſt number, I declared my intention of conſidering, is ſo highly in favour of the ſacerdotal tribe. It confounds the ſenſes, and inſults the natural feelings of the heart, more, perhaps, than any formulary which has proceeded from the pen of mortals; and it is, therefore, proportionably valuable in the eyes of prieſts. It declares, "that whoſoever would be ſaved muſt, before all things, hold the catholic faith;" thus, by a ſingle ſentence, demoliſhing the ſtrength of our obligation to every divine and ſocial virtue. It further pretends to explain that faith by an accumulation of abſurdities, until contradictions riſe on contradictions, like Alps on Alps, and

the giddy imagination looks down with terror from the height, which the impiety of man hath thus raiſed, in oppoſition to the truth of God. With intermingled denunciations of excluſion from the ſeats of bliſs, it rolls on its hideous floods of blaſphemies, until, at length, it cloſes in execrations too horrible to hear, in the vehemency of its curſes, emulating the language of the fiends of hell.

By ſubjugating your underſtanding to the dominion of the prieſt, you open the door to myſtery, and the worſt ſpecies of deſpotic power. Myſtery, is another name for papal Rome; and, therefore, in whatever country the myſterious creed of Athanaſius is eſtabliſhed, there popery is eſtabliſhed by law.

Deprive the prieſt of his favourite power of creed-making, and of creed-impoſing, and reaſon re-aſſumes her throne, and true religion beams, with unclouded luſtre, on the mind; the virtues follow in quick ſucceſſion, and all is light, tranquility, and joy.

I may appear warm, perhaps, in my expreſſions: my heart, indeed, is warmed, whenever

whenever the queſtion of ſubſcription to human formularies of faith and doctrine darts upon my mind; my heart is warmed with zeal for the beſt intereſts of man, and with tender compaſſion for my fellow-creatures, who can never expect to enjoy true ſatisfaction in religion, or comfort in the enjoyment of their duty, until, by one generous exertion of their ſtrength, they utterly aboliſh the remains of papal tyranny in theſe kingdoms; and, by vindicating to themſelves and their poſterity the right of private judgment, in oppoſition to authority in controverſies of faith, at length, aſſert the common rights of chriſtians; rights, which are conſtitutionally theirs, as members of a proteſtant church; rights, which are conceded to them by the God of reaſon, becauſe upon the exertion of them depends their improvement in the knowledge and practice of that goſpel, which the God of reaſon hath revealed; rights, which it is therefore treaſon and rebellion againſt the majeſty of heaven to renounce.

V.

OCTOBER 6, 1772.

IN my laſt number, I, perhaps, may have appeared to have ſpoken with too little reverence of the prieſthood; and may have induced ſome of my fellow-citizens to think, that, while I am pleading for a diminution of ſacerdotal power, I really aim at a total abolition of the order. I have already explained myſelf in ſuch a manner, that no perſon who peruſes my ſecond number can ſuppoſe I mean to repreſent as uſeleſs a ſet of men, whoſe miniſterial labours are capable of being rendered ſo beneficial to their brethren. I will, however, now endeavour to ſtate more fully my notions on this ſubject.

The obvious advantages of a preconceived and eſtabliſhed form of prayer, will always induce the majority of a ſenſible people to adopt ſuch a mode of addreſſing the almighty, in the religious aſſemblies of the nation; and the advantages attending upon weekly

weekly inſtruction, from the pulpit, will likewiſe always induce the ſame majority to ſet apart a portion of the public money, for the ſupport of an order of men properly qualified to expound the word of God, to thoſe congregations, in which they are appointed to miniſter, by the civil conſtitutions of their country.

As an education ſuitable to the importance of their office, and a ſtate of eaſy independence, will render them reſpectable, and, therefore, give their exhortations a proper weight with their people, the ſtipends, of the loweſt of this order, ſhould be ſuch, as may ſet them above the contempt of their brethren: different ranks and orders ſhould alſo be eſtabliſhed, with a view of maintaining diſcipline, preſerving decency, and encouraging emulation in the diſcharge of their momentous duties.

After ſuch conceſſions, I cannot be eſteemed an enemy to the ſacerdotal order. I only wiſh to reſtrain its indecent exerciſe of a power, to which it has certainly no juſt pretenſions, viz. the power of dictating in matters

matters of opinion, and of deciding, with authority, in controverſies of faith.

When I hear a lecturer, from the pulpit, explain a text of ſcripture, I conſider him as a perſon engaged in the diſcharge of a very uſeful office; but, though I hear him with attention, I will not, therefore, compliment him with my underſtanding, and implicitly ſubmit to the interpretation of a mortal, of like infirmities with myſelf. The word of God is the property of the meaneſt chriſtian. Its authority is ſacred with me, becauſe by obedience to it I expect ſalvation; but, if I expect to be benefited by that word, I muſt imitate the example of the Bereans, and, by my own inquiry into my bible, become ſatisfied, that the doctrine declared to me from the pulpit, is truly the doctrine of the goſpel. If my prieſt aſſumes to himſelf an excluſive right of interpreting that word, and obliges me to acquieſce in his explanation, the prieſt is then my God, I renounce that reaſon which the almighty hath afforded me, and am led captive at the will of a perſon, who, from human frailty, will be tempted to ſacrifice

crifice my intereſt to his own: for experience ſhews, that from the moment an opinion is generally adopted, that the key of knowledge is intruſted to his care, he will exact ſuch a return of temporal poſſeſſions for his ſpiritual treaſures, as will, in proceſs of time, reduce the whole territory to his dominion, and elevate his character, above the ſtate and dignity of kings.

It is alſo proper that we, from time to time, ſhould hear the ſolemn denunciations of the almighty's vengeance againſt vice, as well as the comfortable aſſurances of the divine mercy and forbearance. To ſuch denunciations and aſſurances, as are contained in ſcripture, I willingly attend; but then I attend to them, becauſe they are contained in the goſpel, not becauſe they are pronounced by the lips of a mitred or unmitred prieſt. But if he can perſuade me, that God hath given him an authority to forgive the ſins of mortals, he will, with eaſe, accompliſh an uncontroulable dominion over my temporal eſtate. In the hour of death, I would gladly give up my treaſure to the man, who, "in the name of the father,

ſon, and holy ghoſt," ſhall aſſure me of the pardon of my ſins *.

That the prieſts of the eſtabliſhment claim ſuch powers, is evident from many parts of the offices, and of the ſervice of our church. And, in the twentieth article it is expreſsly, and in ſo many words, aſſerted, "that the church, (by which we are always exhorted to underſtand the prieſthood,) has an authority in controverſies of faith." They will own, indeed, in the ſame article, that this authority does not reach to a power of decreeing any thing which is contrary to ſcripture; yet, while they claim the power of deciding upon the merits of the controverſy, and declare that the curſe of God, and the vengeance of man †, ſhall overtake every perſon, who, by writing or adviſed ſpeaking, ſhall oppoſe their articles and explanations, they, in fact, exerciſe a power equal, in all reſpects, to the power and dominion of the pope of Rome; they exerciſe a power,

* See the form of abſolution in the "Office of viſitation of the ſick."

† See ſtat. 9 & 10 Will. III. c. 32. and the firſt five canons of our church.

a power, prejudicial to the cauſe of truth and virtue; a power, to which they have not the leaſt ſhadow of pretenſion; a power, laſtly, which has been, is, and always will be, exerciſed in fettering the underſtandings, and debaſing the morals of mankind.

VI.

October 8, 1772.

When the divine founder of our religion appeared upon earth, and declared a doctrine productive of glory to God, and of good-will to man, it was aſſerted, as a conſideration of the greateſt conſequence, "that the goſpel was preached to the poor."

By the twelfth chapter of the thirteenth of Elizabeth, the clergy are bound to preach the doctrine of the articles. Let the articles be preached, and if the poor can underſtand the hundredth part of them, though aſſerted by all the clergy in Great Britain, I will give up the controverſy, and drop my pen for ever.

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The queſtion is, therefore, naturally aſked, why do the governors of the church contend for the practice of ſubſcribing articles, which it is known the majority of them do not believe, and which they can never render intelligible to their brethren? A ſatisfactory anſwer to this queſtion has never hitherto been given; and yet, both rich and poor have a right to be reſolved, as ſo conſiderable a part of the public treaſure, a ſum amounting to more than a million ſterling, is annually expended in the ſupport of a prieſthood, whoſe proper office it is to teach religion to the people.

Come forward, then, ye prieſts of every denomination, and vindicate yourſelves, if poſſible, in the face of this inſulted people. Explain to them the grounds of that authority whereby you impoſe upon us the myſterious doctrine of the trinity; the myſterious doctrine of original ſin; the myſterious doctrine of juſtification by faith, and not by works; and thoſe other myſteries, which, with envious breath, you have raiſed as clouds to veil the meridian ſplendors of the goſpel from the ſight of men. They, who have

have the power to iſſue a "quo warranto," which may ſtrike at the very charter of your incorporation, have a right to be informed; and your refuſal to comply with their juſt demands, though called upon by the voice of thouſands, in the preſent controverſy about ſubſcriptions, ſhews, that you dare not ſubmit your cauſe to the high tribunal of the ſcriptures, or to the deciſion of reaſon, "that lord chief juſtice in the court of man."

Uſe and cuſtom can reconcile us to the greateſt abſurdities; but, in a future age, it will not be credited, that a controverſy of a religious nature was agitated by the people of Great Britain, and that not a ſingle biſhop appeared in ſupport of the articles, which were ſo violently aſſailed in the ſtorm. That not a ſingle biſhop has written a line upon the ſubject, is known to every perſon in the kingdom, who has intereſted himſelf a moment in this important controverſy. The inference muſt follow, in the mind of every diſpaſſionate man, that the power they exerciſe of impoſing articles of faith and doctrine upon the conſciences of their brethren,

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is abſolutely deſtitute of the leaſt foundation. Relying upon the ſupport of adminiſtration, which now, for intereſted reaſons, is favourable to their ſyſtem, they ſet the underſtanding of the people at defiance; and, to every good hope and practice reprobate, they ſmile at the folly of their deluded countrymen, reſting ſatisfied, that the higher the national religion is charged with inconſiſtency and blaſphemy, the more obſequious will the people be, in the meaſure of their obedience.

Religion was inſtituted for the benefit of all men; it was intended to be the guide and directreſs of our way, in every walk of life. Its ſanction ſhould be therefore accurately propounded, and its doctrines evidently declared in the moſt intelligible language, in order, that the underſtanding may be improved, and the heart engaged in its practice.

Myſtery, therefore, is the bane of all religion; it compels the underſtanding to reſign its diſcerning powers, and freezes every genial, generous current of the ſoul. The man, who believes that true religion is myſterious,

terious, inſults the bounty of providence, by degrading thoſe faculties which elevate him above the beaſts that periſh; and diſhonours the holy author of our faith, by aſcribing to him the properties of the prince of darkneſs, who is ever repreſented in the goſpel, as engaged in effecting the deſtruction of our mental powers, as his darling work.

God is not the author of confuſion; he is the God of peace. He calls upon every man to exert his nobleſt faculties in his ſervice: he has given to every individual a power of diſcerning between right and wrong: he has given his goſpel as our rule of faith and practice; and, therefore, expects that we work out our own ſalvation with fear and trembling. In a word, he has given unto us a religion which at firſt was preached to the poor; and, therefore, we may reſt perſuaded, that the lowlieſt of the ſons of men poſſeſs the power of arriving at the knowledge of it, without the aid of articles framed by mens' device, and without being obliged to reſign the clear deductions of our own reaſon, to the determinations of a proud, imperious, proſtituted prieſt.

VII. Oc-

VII.

OCTOBER 13, 1772.

AT the time of the reformation, it was objected to the clergy, as a crime of an atrocious nature, that they with-held, to the utmoſt of their power, the knowledge of the ſcriptures, by obſtructing the tranſlation of them into the vernacular language of the country, and by maintaining, that unto themſelves was committed the authority of interpreting theſe lively oracles of God. I could wiſh that every diſpaſſionate man who is in the leaſt verſed in the hiſtory of papal uſurpations, would lay his hand upon his heart, and aſk himſelf the queſtion, whether it does not appear, from ſome late manœuvres, that the ſuperior clergy of the church of England are actuated by the ſame ſpirit of myſtery and concealment, which diſgraces the counſels of that church, from which we have imperfectly reformed? I will endeavour to ſtate the matter to the beſt of my capacity, and leave my readers to decide upon the

the difference between an italian and an engliſh prelate; between an archbiſhop of Canterbury and a pope of Rome.

Let us ſuppoſe then, that the prieſthood, in general, or the clergy of any ſingle kingdom in particular, under a pretence that it would differve the cauſe of chriſtianity, to permit the unlimited exerciſe of private judgment in controverſies of faith, ſhould form a reſolution of reſtraining it to the utmoſt of their ability.

The meaſures, whereby they would hope to effect their purpoſe would be various, according to the various maxims of the ages they live in, and the different political principles of the countries, in which they exerciſed their rule.

The moſt obvious method, unqueſtionably, would be, to forbid the tranſlating of the bible into the vulgar tongue, under ſuch pains and penalties, as would effectually reſtrain the temerity of the boldeſt oppugner of their power.

The natural conſequence of ſuch a meaſure, in a ſuperſtitious age, will be, ſuch a reverence of the prieſt as knows no bounds.

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The poſſeſſor of ſuperior knowledge has a natural claim to our reſpect; and, where the ſubject matter of that knowledge is religion, ſelf-love will inflame the paſſions to an enthuſiaſm of veneration, which will lead us to place the perſon of the prieſt in the ſhrine of worſhip, and throw a glory round him, which will render him more awful in our eyes, than even the divinity itſelf.

But the opinion that a vaſt ſuperiority of religious knowledge prevails in any man or order of men, muſt be as prejudicial to the tranquility of their neighbours as the real poſſeſſion of unlimited dominion, ſince human frailty would induce the poſſeſſors, in both caſes, to exert their influence in promoting the gratification of their own paſſions, although ſuch gratification be oppoſed to the juſt emoluments and privileges of the ſubject, and be connected with the annihilation of all morality in the people.

It is the intereſt, therefore, of the community, that no one order of men ſhould enjoy, or be ſuppoſed to enjoy, a monopoly of all the religious knowledge in the nation.

There are two methods of preventing the evil

evil in queſtion; the one, by abſolutely denying to the clergy the uſe of the book from which the prieſts are ſuppoſed to gain their knowledge; the other, by ſpreading the knowledge of the goſpel among all ranks and orders in the ſtate.

The firſt, is a method unworthy of being adopted in any civilized nation; the ſecond, would be productive of advantages to civil liberty, to public virtue, and to private happineſs, in a manner, inconceivable by thoſe who have not traced the connection between a free conſtitution, and a rational religion.

The prieſt will murmur an objection to ſuch a liberal mode of conduct, and urge, that religion is myſterious; that it containeth truths, which ought not to be made the ſubject of diſputation by the vulgar.

But we will ſilence him, beyond all power of complaint, by referring him to the fact, which I inſiſted upon in a former number, viz. "the goſpel was preached to the poor."

One reſource, however, ſtill remains, whereby he is enabled to continue the exerciſe of his hateful authority over the free-

born mind, he will labour to eſtabliſh ſubſcription to human formularies of faith.

Leſt my countrymen ſhould not immediately ſee the evil tendency of this pernicious practice, I will endeavour to delineate it in its genuine colours; firſt premiſing, that the real doctrines of the ſacred code will be effectually veiled from human ſight, whether the tranſlating of it be prohibited by law, or the inferior clergy be obliged by ſubſcription to deliver, as of ſcriptural authority, ſuch doctrines as are contrary to the word of God.

Subſcription, then, is impoſed early in life, leſt the perſon ſubſcribing ſhould perceive the abſurdity of the propoſition to which he gives an "ex animo" aſſent, and ſhould conſequently ſtruggle againſt the ignominious yoke prepared for his neck.

Subſcription is impoſed frequently upon the ſame ſubject, in order to habituate the perſon ſubſcribing, to give the lie to his own conſcience with as little remorſe as poſſible, and to ſtop his mouth by the "argumentum ad crumenam," ſhould he ever preſume to remonſtrate againſt the unlawfulneſs of the impoſition.

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The propoſitions to be ſubſcribed are rendered as abſurd and blaſphemous as poſſible, in order to deſtroy every vital principle of religion, and effect an intire extinction of the moral ſenſe; it being impoſſible to eſtabliſh the ſyſtem of religious deſpotiſm completely, until every maxim of ſound reaſon, and every principle of pure morality, is utterly obliterated from the human mind.

The biſhops, in particular, will be ſtrenuous to maintain the impoſition of ſubſcription, becauſe it enables them to ſuppreſs every attempt towards a perfect comprehenſion of the ſcriptures; and becauſe, every exerciſe of the right of private judgment, tends to carry us ſtill farther from the church of Rome.

VIII.

OCTOBER 24, 1772.

"AN OUNCE OF A MAN'S OWN SENSE, IS WORTH A TON OF OTHER PEOPLES."

STERNE.

IN conſequence of the preſent important controverſy concerning ſubſcriptions, I have been led into ſome reflections relating to the nature of the "religious principle," which I ſhall now offer to the conſideration of the candid reader.

By a principle in morals, we muſt be underſtood to mean the prevailing diſpoſition of the mind, or its approbation of any particular courſe of action, evidenced in our conduct; if, for inſtance, we obſerve a man, in his intercourſe with his neighbours, to be attentive to his own intereſt in every circumſtance, and on every occaſion where he has a poſſibility of advancing it, we, without ceremony, aſſert, that he is governed by "a ſelfiſh principle."

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When we obſerve a man of underſtanding, who, in the common concerns of life, is juſt, generous, candid, and ſincere; but, when moving in a different ſphere, and aſſociated with men in power, or with men in oppoſition, no longer diſtinguiſhed by each amiable virtue, but, on the contrary, ſacrificing honour, conſcience, ſincerity, and virtue, at the ſhrine of ſome political maxim; we pronounce, in ſuch caſes, the perſon to be actuated by a "principle of party."

When we obſerve a perſon, throughout the whole of his demeanour, conducting himſelf with a ſubmiſſive attention to the will of that almighty being, from whom he received the powers of thought, and capacity of action; when we behold him, regulating every part of his conduct, in conformity to the dictates of ſound reaſon and his conſcience; and, emulative of the joy of God, when he beholds an happy world, diſpenſing the means of happineſs to all around him; in life, the friend of man; in death, with holy truſt, confiding in his God; we pronounce him to be actuated by a "principle of piety and benevolence;" or, in other

words, we attribute to him juſtly, whatever be his mode of faith, or outward worſhip, the honourable appellation of the "religious man."

In the production of this principle, various cauſes are frequently combined.

An habit of acting juſtly and generouſly in early life; an habit, induced by education in the doctrines and practice of a rational religion, will produce this principle, without any remarkable exertion of the mind.

It is the produce alſo of ſerious reflection, and of our mental capacities, exerting themſelves in the ſearch of religious knowledge, and applying the maxims, which are the reſult of ſuch inquiries, to the melioration of our moral powers.

The firſt method of acquiring the religious principle, is ſuited to the care of children, and to thoſe, who, engaged in the occupations incumbent upon the lower ſtations of ſociety, are, by the condition of their being, deprived of the opportunity of evidencing any remarkable exertion of their reaſon, in the choice of a religion.

From hence, we ſee the neceſſity of a religious education, and of reſpect to religious ordinances, if thoroughly purged from popiſh ſuperſtitions; as well as the propriety of my aſſertion, that every maſter of a family, to whom leiſure is in the ſmalleſt degree afforded, ſhould be alſo the prieſt of his family, as far as relates to inſtruction in thoſe religious maxims, which bring forth fruit in virtuous practice.

Hence alſo we may ſee the uſe and advantage of a national clergy, bound by the moſt ſolemn ties of honour and of conſcience, faithfully to execute their truſt; a truſt, which calls upon them to preach the pure, unmixed, uncorrupted word of God; a truſt, which it is impoſſible for them to diſcharge, with ſincerity and zeal, while bound alſo to ſubſcribe their unfeigned aſſent to articles of faith and doctrine, confeſſedly of man's device, and which, it is now generally ſuppoſed, not one in a thouſand in his heart believes.

In the ſecond method of acquiring the religious principle, a method which it is the duty of all to purſue, whoſe ſtate of life

and rational accompliſhments ſhall enable them to inquire into the grounds and evidences of all religious facts and doctrines, the exerciſe of private judgment is ſtill more indiſpenſably required. For ſuch men to reſign their underſtandings to the deciſions of human authority in controverſies of faith, is the greateſt degradation to which they can poſſibly ſubmit. In affairs wherein worldly prudence is concerned, every man has ſome maxims of conduct, the reſult of experience, by which he ſhapes his courſe. You muſt permit the ſame indulgence to him who is travelling, through the wilderneſs of human life, to a better and more enduring ſtate; you muſt permit him to eye the country round; you muſt permit him to chuſe the walk which his own judgment ſhall approve, if you would wiſh him to proceed, with comfort and ſatisfaction to himſelf. You may offer him what aſſiſtance you think proper; but, if you intend it ſhould be of any advantage to him, it muſt only be in the way of friendly intimation and advice.

When the magiſtrate, therefore, has made a legal proviſion for the eſtabliſhment of an order of men, appointed to miniſter in the congregation of chriſtians, according to a preconceived form of prayer, and to preach the goſpel, pure and uncorrupted, to the people, he has done his part; more he ſhould not preſume to do: and it is thy duty, O man, whatever be thy ſtation, if, with a ſafe conſcience, thou canſt be preſent at the ceremonial in which they miniſter, to attend to their inſtructive voice; yet, at the ſame time, with a full aſſurance, that then only canſt thou enjoy the fruits of thy attendance, when thy conduct is ſwayed by principles, which thy unbiaſſed judgment ſhall approve. If thou acknowledgeſt the goſpel to be the word of that God, who is the creator of the world, and the lord of all that inhabit it, thy happineſs depends upon a ſtrict obedience to this word; and, if thou liveſt in a country, where the legal miniſters of that word are bound by the nature of their office, and permitted by the laws, to declare that word in its primæval purity, to the beſt of their capacity and power, rejoice in the circum-

circumſtances of thy lot; but, indulge not the fond deluſion, that now thou liveſt in ſuch a country; for, the miniſters of the church of England, by acceding to ſubſcription to human formularies of faith and doctrine, have, one and all, acceded to an obligation, whereby they bind themſelves to give the people, from their pulpits, the commandments of fallible men, in the place of the infallible word of God; and to mix the corruptions of the worſt of popiſh times, with the immaculate doctrines of the goſpel.

IX.

NOVEMBER 14, 1772.

IT has often been pleaded as an excuſe for the continuance of ſubſcription to the thirty-nine articles, that they inculcate nothing contrary to ſound morality; that the removal of this ſecurity would be the occaſion of much unchriſtian altercation; and, that an holy practice may be connected with a profeſſion of faith, in ſome points confeſſedly erroneous and abſurd.

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I am not unconſcious of its having been aſſerted, that a morality conformable to the ſpirit and doctrine of the articles, would be the practice rather of devils incarnate, than of men. But, the truth of this aſſertion is not the point which I would principally aim at eſtabliſhing, in the preſent paper. Conſidering, according to Dr. Tucker's idea, the thirty-nine articles as profeſſedly the center of union, or rule of religious conduct, to the engliſh church, I will endeavour to ſhew the bad conſequences which ariſe from adopting a center of union, or rule of conduct, in many inſtances, too abſtruſe to be comprehended; in the remaining caſes, too abſurd to be believed.

In the firſt place, if the thirty-nine articles form the confeſſion of the majority of the nation, the ſcriptures will naturally be ſuppoſed, by the generality, to ſpeak the ſame doctrine with the articles; and this idea will be confirmed, in the mind of every lay member of our church, when he reflects, that, by the formulary of the clerical ſubſcription, his paſtor, (who he juſtly ſuppoſes has ſufficient leiſure and abilities for

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an inquiry into their contents,) upon due examination, declares it to be his real perſuaſion, " that all and every of theſe articles are agreeable to the word of God."

The conſequence of ſuch connection will be, that if the articles appear abſurd in the apprehenſion of the layman, the ſcriptures will appear abſurd alſo in his eyes. And thus an irreparable injury will be done to the infallible word of God, through the means of that fallible confeſſion, which is ſubſtituted in its place.

The religion, therefore, of the country appearing too abſurd to be believed, and the religion of the goſpel being inviſible, by reaſon of the interpoſition of the national confeſſion of faith, the conſequence generally follows, that the layman is of no religion at all.

And the prieſt, in conſequence of having been ſo long accuſtomed to ſtifle his convictions, and to inculcate from the pulpit a religion which he knows to be falſe, loſes all affection for truth; nay, even the capacity of diſcerning it; and thus, at length, is carried away captive by the very infidelity, which his own preaching hath produced.

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In this ſtate of things, the unhappy perſon, deſtitute of one of the ſtrongeſt incentives to every uſeful and honourable action, lies open to the attacks of every unworthy paſſion, and, in calamity and danger, is deprived of every rational conſolation and ſupport.

Let experience be appealed to; experience will convince us, that ſome reſolutions of reſpect to decency of character, to propriety of deportment; a few generous affections derived from a promiſcuous commerce with the world; a few maxims of moral conduct, embraced without choice or diſcernment, conſtitute the ſum total of thoſe internal motives, which influence the manners of ſome of the worthieſt perſons in this nation.

But, how deficient are ſuch manners, when compared with the practice of the real chriſtian! that chriſtian, who, employing his nobleſt faculties upon their nobleſt object, ſearches for himſelf, into the lively oracles of God; and, unfettered by human articles, and confeſſions of faith, explores the truths of heaven, with intrepidity and zeal; adopting, as his creed, whatever appears reaſonable, juſt,

juſt, and good; and, ever labouring to adorn his profeſſion, by an unblemiſhed life and converſation.

But in order to confirm, beyond all poſſibility of objection, the ſuperiority of the chriſtian's motive, permit me to inſiſt a little on what appears to be a chriſtian's creed. Permit me, ſtruck with the bright example of a Savile, bearing teſtimony to the excellence of the principles which he profeſſes, by the excellence of his practice, to trace out the lovely form of true religion, and to delineate that beauteous train of virtues, to which ſhe gives exiſtence, by her more than magic wand.

True religion, the religion of the goſpel, is founded on the ſolid baſis of ſound reaſon, and uncontroverted fact.

She leads us to the acknowledgment of one almighty being, the author of all nature, who formed us from the duſt of the earth; whoſe providential arm ſupports our ſteps, and whoſe re-creative power will finally raiſe us from the ſleep of death, if here we have been found obedient to the precepts delivered by his ſervant Jeſus, to the poſſeſſion of an immortality of joy.

In her appeals to man, ſhe appeals to the under-

underſtanding and the heart. She diſclaims the aids of human power; and, although ſhe is a friend to every ſignificant rite, to every decent ceremony, ſhe invokes not the aſſiſtance of ſuperſtition, in order to enable her to rule the vulgar herd.

She calls upon us, with moſt perſuaſive voice, (a voice, to which, in every good man's heart, a voice is heard reſponſive,) to worſhip our creator in ſpirit and in truth.

She has not indeed ſpecifically recommended thoſe rites and ceremonies, with which ſuch worſhip ſhall be accompanied. She permits each nation to adopt thoſe forms, which its inhabitants ſhall judge to be moſt effectual, towards engaging the affections in her ſervice; and, leaves to leſſer communities of men, the unreſtrained liberty of worſhipping the almighty, in whatever manner they ſee good.

She delineates the evil tendencies of vice, the probable conſequences of virtue, with all the inchanting energy of language; and gives a reality to every virtue ſhe inculcates, by exemplifying them in a living pattern of each moral excellence.

As the weakneſs and folly of mankind would

would frequently diſpoſe them to ſubſtitute ſome rite or empty ceremony, ſome mode or myſterious article of faith, in the room of that righteous practice, which a God of righteouſneſs only can approve; ſhe inceſſantly aſſures us, that in vain ſhall we expect that the gates of heaven will be unfolded for our admittance, unleſs our lives be ornamented with each heavenly virtue.

Nor is the ſacred flame which animates the patriot, unknown to the profeſſor of the goſpel. Superior to the ſmiles or frowns of fortune, he treads the paths of public virtue with determined reſolution; and, like the amiable founder of our religion, diſſolves in tears, at the proſpect of the impending deſolation of his country.

But ſhe preſcribes, as the great eſſential duty of mankind, a boundleſs benevolence, an unlimited affection, to all the creatures of our common parent; and recommends the principle of fervent love, as the proper motive, or incentive, to every action ſhe approves.

She exhorts us to beat down the ſpirit of pride, which cauſes us to inſult the lowly fortune of our leſs happy neighbour; and to reſtrain the paſſion and reſentment, which

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ariſe from a ſenſe of the injuries inflicted on us by wicked and unreaſonable men.

She forbids us to glory in the ferocity of our nature, or to ſteel our hearts againſt the ſoft ſenſations of pity and compaſſion. She repreſents to us, that it is better for ourſelves, as well as others, that our hearts ſhould overflow with the milk of human kindneſs, that we ſhould melt at every tale of woe, than poſſeſs that unfeeling temper, which forbids us to rejoice when we hear the voice of joy and gladneſs, which with-holds our tears amidſt the diſtreſſes of a creature of like paſſions with ourſelves.

She teaches us, therefore, that although the relations of life are numerous, yet the common bond is one. That bond is "ſocial love."

A compliance with her precepts leads the mind, by juſt gradations, to every gratification, which is ſuited to its advancing nature. It opens new ſcenes of enjoyment to our view, and renders credible a vaſt improvement of our happineſs in the next world, by the actual enjoyment of a conſtantly improving happineſs in this.

Obedience to her mild, her gentle ſway, ſubdues each fiercer paſſion of our nature, reſtores peace and true enjoyment to the troubled mind, draws from adverſity its ſting, and gives to proſperity its trueſt pleaſure, the pleaſure of conſcious virtue, the perſuaſion, nay even full conviction, of an approving God.

Go now, preſumptuous prieſt, go preach the doctrine of the articles; a doctrine, in almoſt every inſtance, oppoſite to the doctrine thou haſt read. The daring ſpirit of infidelity ſhall accompany thy progreſs; mitred corruption ſhall ſit enthroned beſide thee; and every vice, which deforms our nature, ſhall be found in thy retinue. Yet go on fearleſs in thy courſe. Inflated with pride, miſled by paſſion, with hypocriſy for thy guide, in imitation of the worſt of popiſh ſaints; in oppoſition to the voice of reaſon and the goſpel, and in defiance of thy own convictions, denounce damnation, and fulminate the everlaſting terrors of avenging heaven againſt all, who ſhall dare to differ from the eſtabliſhed creed. Be the god of conſcience; penetrate the heart; be the advocate of intolerance,

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the adverſary of every ſcheme of reformation. Be the patron of each vice, the ſcourge of virtue, the enemy of thy country, the enemy of man. The wiſe man ſhall deſpiſe thee, the friend of human nature ſhall deteſt thee, but adminiſtration ſhall promote thee to great honour, and the epiſcopal bench ſhall hail, with ſongs of gratulation, thy ſucceſs.

X.

MARCH 25, 1773.

IT has given me pleaſure to obſerve, in the public papers, that all traces of manly ſpirit and ſteady reſolution are not yet worn out at Cambridge. The conduct of Mr. Blackburne of Peterhouſe, in refuſing to bear teſtimony to the truth of the athanaſian creed; a creed, which every profeſſing member of the church of England avows as one of the formularies of his faith; at the ſame time that it does honour to the virtuous youth, reflects diſgrace upon the managers of that once famous univerſity, who, in their late jeſuitical ſubſtitution for ſubſcrip-

tion to the articles, ſtill continue to impoſe it. They continue to impoſe it againſt their better knowledge; at a time, when it is generally believed, that not a ſingle head of an houſe has the effrontery to own that he believes it.

If there be a religion upon earth deteſtable in the ſight of the almighty, it muſt be that religion from which we have imperfectly reformed; becauſe it is a religion, which, excluding from ſalvation all who are without its pale, breathes the baleful ſpirit of intolerance; a ſpirit, moſt oppoſed to the mild and gentle ſpirit of the goſpel; a ſpirit, ever unfriendly to the ſocial intereſts of men.

Urged by a zeal in favour of our own perſuaſions, we often intemperately inveigh againſt the corrupted doctrines of antichriſtian Rome. But we are to conſider, that the corrupteſt of its doctrines may be rejected, while its principle of unholy domination over the conſciences of men is retained in fulleſt force.

Miſtakes of individuals, of churches, and of nations, in points of doctrine, we truſt,

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are venial; but the ſpirit of intolerance, wherever found, muſt ſurely be odious in the ſight of heaven. The people whoſe creeds, whoſe liturgy, whoſe laws ſhall breathe this ſpirit, are ſtill immerſed in the thickeſt gloom of popery. Such is the ſtate of many of the nations which ſurround us; and, while the creed of Athanaſius is eſtabliſhed by law, the kingdoms to which we belong, cannot be ſucceſsfully vindicated from bearing a ſhare in this reproach.

The opinions avowed in this famous formulary, indeed appear ſo abhorrent from right reaſon, as well as the expreſs authority of ſcripture, that much art and pains have been employed, by ingenious men, to explain its ſenſe, in terms leſs offenſive to the rational inquirer; as well as to ſoften the effuſions of worſe than ſatanical ſpleen, into a ſpirit more agreeable to the benevolent genius of the goſpel. But the event has always mocked their toils. This monſtrous doctrine is laid down with a preciſion, which, on another ſubject, would be worthy of our admiration; and the denunciations of divine vengeance, as well as the formulary of ſub-

ſcription to them, are expreſſed with ſuch a powerful energy of language, as ſimplicity cannot miſtake, or jeſuitry itſelf elude. The conſequence is unavoidable; while the terms in which we expreſs our aſſent to this confeſſion are equally ſtrong, with thoſe in which we expreſs our belief in the ſcriptures themſelves, the adverſaries of our religion, who are not intereſted in our nice diſtinctions, will ſuppoſe, that we believe them both, with an equal fervour of approbation; and, from the zeal with which we contend for the continuance of ſubſcription to this formulary, will naturally conclude, that we are actuated by the ſame infernal ſpirit, which informed the mind of the perſon who compoſed it.

But if, on the other hand, it is maintained, that the doctrines of this creed are too abſurd to be believed, and the execrations which it ſo liberally pours forth upon its impugners, are too horrible to be underſtood in the primary meaning of the terms; and if, in conſequence of this conviction, it is contended that a latitude muſt be allowed in the interpretation of the formulary of

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aſſent to it; we muſt reply, that all ſuch attempts, from whatever motive they proceed, are altogether unjuſtifiable, inaſmuch as they have an obvious tendency to leſſen the force of thoſe obligations, which, in matters of religion, ſhould be ever ſacred and inviolable. The language of truth is ever ſimple and conſiſtent; and the friends of truth ſhould ever proceed, by direct and undiſguiſed ſteps, to the accompliſhment of their purpoſe. If the ſentiments of the nation have varied with reſpect to the ſenſe of Athanaſius, ſince the time of the reformation, let the nation declare this change in its ſentiments, in unequivocal language, the language of the laws; if, on the contrary, the majority are perſuaded that "whoever will be ſaved, muſt hold the catholic faith," as this favourite ſupporter of a papal hierarchy hath defined it, let us honeſtly confeſs, that the doctrine of intolerance is the genuine doctrine of the engliſh church; nor let us, any longer, with hypocritical zeal, labour to infix this note of reprobation on the front of the roman pontiff, when the mark of the beaſt is ſo apparent on our own.

XI.

JULY 29, 1773.

I HAVE always accuſtomed myſelf to look upon the ſtate, as a kind of larger family; in which kings, miniſters, and prieſts, are to be eſteemed in the light of ſervants, who are commiſſioned, by the people, to execute thoſe various offices and truſts, which the general wiſdom hath inſtituted, for the purpoſe of promoting the general good.

Upon this idea, a ſolution may be afforded to many intereſting queſtions, which it has always been the practice of ſtateſmen and high-churchmen to keep involved in deep obſcurity.

Thus, if it be demanded, in what circumſtances doth the kingly power or authority expire? the anſwer is plain: when the people no longer think him worthy of their confidence and favour. Let us conſider the caſe of a private family. Doth the ſervant claim a right of holding his ſtation, when his maſter hath juſt reaſon to be diſſatisfied

diſſatisfied with his ſervice? and, is not that maſter excluſively the judge, whether the ſervant executes his office with fidelity, and zeal?

It cannot be urged, as an objection to this doctrine, that danger may ariſe of civil commotions, from the prevalence of ſuch opinion of the delegated truſt of kingſhip. The diſcarding of a monarch will not be attempted, unleſs in times of general diſſatisfaction; when the royal conduct has been diſtinguiſhed by notorious, and frequently repeated, acts of tyranny and oppreſſion. In ſuch circumſtances, who would not behold with tranſport, the tyrant tumbling headlong from the throne? who would not conſider the voice of the people, which conſigns him to the puniſhment of a traitor, as the voice of God?

The caſe is the ſame with reſpect to the clergy of a kingdom. Intruſted with the morals of a people, inveſted with peculiar privileges, endowed with revenues almoſt princely, they are under indiſpenſable obligations, faithfully and conſcientiouſly, to diſcharge their truſt. Of the nature of this truſt,

truſt, every perſon may form a juſt idea, if he reflects upon the ſolemn manner, in which every clergyman in the kingdom enters upon his charge. The mode of procedure is as follows.

After the candidate hath, in the ſight of God, and of his congregation, declared his intention to ſearch the ſacred writings, and hath bound himſelf, by the ſtrongeſt obligations, to deliver nothing, as of heavenly original, but what he himſelf ſhall be perſuaded is read, or may be proved from the ſcriptures, the biſhop, at the ſame time, delivering a new Teſtament into his hand, thus confers the important charge: "Receive thou authority to read and preach the word of God."

My lord biſhop of London, I addreſs myſelf to you. Is it poſſible, conſcientiouſly, to execute this truſt, while the thirty-nine articles of the church of England continue to be ſubſcribed in the preſence of yourſelf and brethren? Is it poſſible to ſearch the ſcriptures, with earneſtneſs and zeal, while the obligation to interpret them, according to a preſcribed formulary, remains in force?

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Is it poſſible, ſucceſsfully, to oppoſe the infidel, while the chriſtian warrior is obliged to fight in armour, which he hath not proved? Is it probable, that the man will continue to read the ſcriptures with ſatisfaction, who ſuſpects that, in a ſingle inſtance, they are in oppoſition to the eſtabliſhed creed? And, will it not, laſtly, follow, as an inevitable conſequence, that the doctrine preached to the people, will be a mongrel doctrine, an unholy doctrine, the word of man, and not the word of God?

I beſeech you, for a moment, my lord, to ſtop, in your furious career, and weigh the natural tendency of your oppoſition to the friends of the uncorrupted goſpel of your maſter. The people, defrauded of their ſtipulated right, defrauded of that ſpiritual food, for which they give ſo large a portion of their earthly ſubſtance in exchange, will withdraw that ſubſtance; and ſeek ſuch guides, as, being under no temptation to falſify or prevaricate, may rightly divide the word of truth. You will not ſurely diſpute the authority of the people, in this inſtance, for, while they pay you for your ſervice, they are,

are, and muſt be ultimately, the judges of the manner in which you perform your duty. With reſpect to the fact, with reſpect to the public ſentiment of your conduct, the irreligion of the times, and the eſtimation in which the clergy are, in general, held by the laity, too plainly declare, that the ſacred truſt repoſed in them by the people of England, is unfaithfully diſcharged.

But, when men are ſo ſeverely cenſured, it is but fair to hear them in their turn. The ſervant, accuſed by his maſter of a breach of truſt, has an equitable claim to be heard with candour and compaſſion, in his own defence. But I am inclined to think, that the only defence which the clergy, in decency, can make, will not reflect much honour on their brethren in the higher ſtations of the church, who lately had the opportunity of removing the grievance: for, though invited to the work, in the manner they had themſelves preſcribed, with peculiar circumſtances of the baſeſt treachery, withdrew the helping hand.

The clergy then of theſe kingdoms, arraigned at the bar of the impartial public,

and

and required to give anſwer, why they are remiſs and indolent in the diſcharge of their duty; and why vice and infidelity ſo much abound, when the revenues of the church are daily, are hourly, augmenting in every part of the kingdom? the clergy, I ſay, reaſonably plead in their excuſe the want of that liberty, with which Chriſt hath made them free; they plead the want of that liberty to which, as proteſtants, they have an indiſputable claim; and which, if indulged by the laws, would enable them to aſſail, with force irreſiſtible, the ſtrongeſt holds of infidelity; and, at length, to diffuſe the light of chriſtian knowledge; to propagate the practice of thoſe moral virtues, with which the happineſs of individuals, and of nations, is inſeparably joined.

XII.

AUGUST 12, 1773.

IN my laſt number, I declared an intention of offering my reflections upon the caſe of a virtuous and learned youth, who, in January laſt, was refuſed a degree at the

the univerſity of Cambridge. I now ſit down to perform my engagement to the public. In the proſecution of my purpoſe, a regard to ſacred truth ſhall guide every movement of my pen. For, ardently as I wiſh to promote the cauſe of liberty, I truſt, I ſhall ever diſdain to promote it, at the expence of integrity and honour.

But, in order to form an accurate judgment of this tranſaction, it will be neceſſary to refer to ſome preceding facts.

It appeared to be the ſenſe of the majority of the members of the houſe of commons, who ſpoke, in the debate of February 6, 1772, upon the merits of the clerical petition, that the diſſenters ought to be relieved from the impoſition of ſubſcription; and, that the practice ſhould be aboliſhed at both the univerſities.

In conſequence of the general perſuaſion of the impropriety of the requiſition, the duke of Grafton and the biſhop of Peterborough, wrote to the reverend Dr. Brown, the vice-chancellor of Cambridge, aſſuring him, that it was the wiſh of the friends of the univerſity, that ſubſcription

to

to the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, at leaſt, as far as reſpected all lay degrees, ſhould not any longer be required.

A gentleman of character, and conſiderable ſtanding, in the univerſity, obſerving the diſpoſition of the reſident members to be inclined to a relaxation, propoſed a grace for the appointment of a committee to draw up a ſtate of the caſe; and to conſult counſel about the power of effecting the alteration; as doubts had ariſen whether ſtatutes, which, in their formation, ſeemed to have a mixture of royal authority, could be reſcinded without a formal application to the king.

An account of the illiberal treatment that gentleman met with, from the vice-chancellor, and ſome of the heads of houſes, would ſwell my narrative beyond all reaſonable bounds. Let it ſuffice to obſerve, that, after much altercation, a grace did actually paſs the houſe, for the appointment of a committee; that the caſe was ſtated; that Mr. Thurlow, Mr. Wedderburne, Mr. Jackſon, and Mr. Cuſt, were

conſulted]

conſulted upon the ſubject; that the laſt gentleman had doubts about the power, but that the three former were clear and expreſs in their opinion, that academical ſubſcription, in every inſtance wherein it was now required, could be utterly aboliſhed by a vote of the ſenate of Cambridge.

My readers will now expect to hear that this iniquitous, and more than papiſtical impoſition, was immediately removed.

But, an intervening event had cauſed a great alteration in the ſentiments of the univerſity.

Much time had elapſed, between the declaration of the duke of Grafton, and the report of the counſel, to whom the univerſity had appplied.

In this interval, the bill for the relief of the diſſenters had been rejected in the houſe of lords.

The intolerant ſpirit now broke out in all its fury. It now was the general cry, that the univerſity would be ruined by an influx of the diſſenters. It was reſolved, that ſubſcription, even in the caſe of the firſt degree, ſhould ſtill be rigorouſly inſiſted on;

on; and further regulations were talked of, tending to drive the diſſenters intirely from the univerſity.

When, therefore, Mr. Tyrwhitt, with his uſual fairneſs, propoſed his ten graces; all of them, (that for the relief of the muſicians not excepted,) were rejected.

The political party at Cambridge, viz. the apoſtate whigs, when they ſaw the faces of many of the perſons, who came from a diſtance to vote againſt the grace, ſeemed now to be ſeized with ſome compunction; they had kept aloof in the controverſy, but ſaw, with a kind of inſtinctive horror, the tory tribe, who came, in troops, to bear their teſtimony to the good old cauſe; and, although they had left the field, upon the day of trial, yet they now began to be concerned, forſooth, for the credit of the univerſity, and cried out, that after ſo great an apparatus, ſomething, or rather the appearance of ſomething, muſt be done.

In a junto, therefore, of the vice-chancellor, and ſome other perſons, whoſe names I ſhall not mention, at the preſent

juncture, the following declaration was deviſed, as a ſubſtitution for ſubſcription to the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, in the caſe of candidates for the firſt degree in arts; and a grace for its eſtabliſhment, at the inſtance of the vice-chancellor, paſſed the ſenate:

"I do declare, that I am, "bonâ fide," a member of the church of England, as by law eſtabliſhed."

Upon the firſt appearance, it may ſeem probable, that it was the intention of the grace-makers, that the old ſubſcription of aſſent to the doctrines of the church of England, ſhould be ſuperſeded, by the requiſition of a declaration of conformity to its forms of worſhip.

But, if this were their intention, the queſtion is aſked, why did they not chuſe the parliamentary form to which all fellows of colleges are, at preſent, required to ſubſcribe, and which runs as follows:

"I A. B. do declare, that I will conform to the liturgy of the church of England, as it is now by law eſtabliſhed." This is a declaration which alludes to a plain fact,

fact, viz. the act of appearing at, and conforming to the eſtabliſhed worſhip; and, the legiſlature preſumes, that the perſon conſenting is a member of the church of England, without further ceremony. But this would not ſerve the purpoſe of our ſubtile ſubſcriptioniſts.

The words, "I am, bonâ fide, a member of the church of England," may be made to imply more than a mere conformity to the liturgy of the church of England, as by law eſtabliſhed; and, therefore, if the new form could be turned in ſuch a manner, that the youth, at the time of ſubſcribing, might underſtand it as a ſimple declaration of conformity to the eſtabliſhed worſhip, and the impoſers, afterwards, interpret it, as implying an approbation of the eſtabliſhed doctrine, viz. the thirty-nine articles, the cauſe of religious deſpotiſm would ſcarcely ſuffer from the change. But, it may be ſaid, it is uncandid to impute this iniquitous deſign, to the fabricators of this obnoxious grace, and that we ought to take them at their words; for, in private converſation with the anti-

ſubſcriptioniſts, they have frequently explained themſelves, as if they intended nothing, but a declaration of conformity. But ſtill the queſtion recurs, Gentlemen of the junto, when a parliamentary form was before you, why did you not expreſs yourſelves in the cuſtomary language of law?

But, that you meant more than you choſe to expreſs, is apparent from the following facts.

In the month of January, 1773, Mr. Thomas Blackburne, ſtudent of St. Peter's college, having paſſed the uſual examination in his own ſociety, and in the ſenate-houſe, applied for the degree of bachelor in arts, and was rejected.

His teſtimonials and qualifications were as follow;

At the cloſe of the examination, in his own college, the maſter ſigned a paper, importing, that Mr. Blackburne, with two other perſons, had reſided, for the major part of ſuch a number of terms, as the ſtatute requires.

A grace for his degree was then paſſed in

in college, which implies an approbation of his moral conduct, and proficiency in learning.

He appears in the ſenate-houſe, at the cuſtomary hours of examination; and, as he was a youth who had greatly diſtinguiſhed himſelf, in all the previous exerciſes, is particularly noticed during the time of trial.

He paſſes through that trial with applauſe; and, in the judgment of the moderators and all the examiners, is declared worthy of one of the firſt honours, which the univerſity is wont to beſtow, upon approved merit.

At the cloſe of this examination, when nothing now remained, but what is too frequently regarded as a mere form and ceremony, the conſcientious young man hints to the maſter and tutor of his college, his objections to the declaration in queſtion, and delivers, into their hands, the following declaration:

" I, Thomas Blackburne, do hereby declare my full perſuaſion of the truth of the chriſtian religion, as exhibited in the ſcrip-

tures; that I have hitherto communicated with the eſtabliſhed church, and have no preſent intention of communicating with any other."

His "ſupplicat," or petition, for his degree, is next preſented to the caput; the ſubſcription book is called for; and, his name not appearing in its place, the vice-chancellor refuſes to read his ſupplicat, and he is, conſequently, repelled from his degree.

It is in vain for the parties concerned in the rejection to urge, that as the regulation ſtands at preſent, Mr. Blackburne is ſtatutably rejected. The queſtion is aſked, and it is a queſtion which cannot be anſwered to the honour of the univerſity, why was not a grace immediately propoſed for the amendment of this unformal regulation, as a fact had ſhewn, that it was capable of being interpreted in a ſenſe, different from that, which the impoſers themſelves would be underſtood to mean?

There would have been a peculiar propriety in the paſſing of ſuch an amending grace,

grace, as more than one of the former grace-makers were then in the caput.

But, humanity, integrity, and honour, in vain, pleaded in behalf of the conſcientious ſufferer. He is now retired from the univerſity: and, after near four years reſidence, after he had done credit to his college and his friends, by a remarkably ſteady, and uncommonly virtuous demeanor; after he had been honoured by inconteſtible marks of academical approbation, with reſpect to his literary accompliſhments, he is compelled to reſign the fruits of his many labours, and to retire from the univerſity, as if unworthy of its favours.

The circumſtances of the caſe are more aggravating, as a degree was ſome days afterwards conferred upon two perſons, a certificate for whoſe ſufficiency in learning, one, if not both, of the moderators had refuſed to ſign.

And the conſequences are ſtill more to be lamented, as a fellowſhip hath lately fallen in his college, to which there is every reaſon to ſuppoſe Mr. Blackburne would

ſucceed, if he could be perſuaded, for a moment, to let go his integrity.

Such is the encouragement that ſobriety, learning, and regard to each conſcientious principle, lately met with in the proteſtant univerſity of Cambridge! *

[* Mr. Blackburne, was the ſecond ſon of the reverend archdeacon Blackburne. He was born February 15, 1750, and educated under the reverend and learned Anthony Temple, maſter of the grammar-ſchool of Richmond, in Yorkſhire. From thence he was removed to the charter-houſe, on the nomination of the late marquis of Rockingham; and after two years ſpent in that excellent ſeminary, was admitted a ſcholar of St Peter's college, Cambridge. Being refuſed his degree in arts by the univerſity, under the circumſtances ſtated in the preceding paper, he directed his ſtudies to phyſic, and purſued them at Edinburgh and London. He took his degree of doctor of phyſic at Edinburgh in September, 1775, writing his theſis "de medici inſtitutis." Sometime in 1777, he ſettled at Durham; and was, afterwards, elected a fellow of the royal ſociety in London. His practice at Durham was extenſive and ſucceſsful. He died there, June 23, 1782, in the thirty-third year of his age, beloved, honoured, and lamented; and his memory will be long reſpected there, on account of his profeſſional abilities, his learning in other branches of ſcience, his urbanity of manners in general, and his benevolence to the poor and diſtreſſed around him. See Gent. Mag. vol. lii. p. 358. and 375.]

XIII. No-

XIII.

NOVEMBER 18, 1773.

As there is a ſociety, actually ſubſiſting in this kingdom, which profeſſes, for its end and aim, "the propagation of the goſpel," it never can be unſeaſonable to offer a few conſiderations, upon a ſubject ſo important.

The word of prophecy hath aſſured us, that the religion of the goſpel, will, one day, be extended to every region of the habitable world; and that the earth will, at length, be filled with the knowledge of the Lord.

And, if we are poſſeſſed of the proper temper and qualifications, it is an ambition truly noble, to aim at being inſtrumental in the production of this great event.

But, as there is no reaſon to ſuppoſe, that this intention of the almighty will be effected, by a ſecond interpoſition from heaven; as the uſe of force, is diametrically oppoſed to the mild and gentle ſpirit of the goſpel;

goſpel; as the arts of political contrivance, are totally abhorrent from its abſolute ſimplicity, and guileleſs nature; we may reſt aſſured, that a religion, which aims at erecting her eternal throne upon the ruins of every preceding eſtabliſhment, muſt attain her purpoſe, by viſibly diſplaying, in the ſight of nations, the tranſcendent excellency of her native charms.

It certainly muſt be acknowledged, that, if the righteous principles, and exemplary practice of individuals, have ſuch an immediate tendency to promote the cauſe of truth, the combined virtues of a nation may be yet more efficacious, in extending the knowledge of the goſpel to thoſe regions, which ſtill are ſtrangers to its power.

But the religious principles of ſuch a nation, muſt, by no means, reſt upon the baſis of precarious doctrines, and myſterious formularies of faith, the notorious offspring of prieſtly deſpotiſm, and political device. Nor muſt its manners be molded by the prevailing maxims of the wiſdom of this world. And, therefore, in the preſent ſtate of our national manners and religious

polity,

polity, ſuch honour, and ſuch glory, cannot be expected to become the portion of the kingdom to which we belong.

In the place of that celeſtial form of true religion, which, as we read the goſpel page, ſeems, with inviting aſpect, to allure us to the worſhip of our creator in ſimplicity and truth, the almighty has ſuffered us, for our ſins, to ſubſtitute an hideous phantom, whoſe lineaments too plainly diſcloſe the foul original from which it ſprang.

Inſtead of the practice of every public, and of every private virtue, a ſpirit of luxury; a ſpirit of profligacy; a ſpirit of infidelity, hath gone through the land. But the time would fail me, were I to attempt to delineate, in the moſt general terms, the diſſolute manners, and portentous proſtitution, alas! too viſible in every diviſion of ſociety, in every order of the ſtate.

And, although the clergy of theſe kingdoms, by reaſon of a variety of cauſes, are prevented from bearing a conſpicuous part in the faſhionable vices of the times; yet the general ſuſpicion of their inſincerity and

and prevarication, in ſubſcribing to the eſtabliſhed doctrines of our church, in a peculiar manner, diſqualifies them from diſcharging the various parts of their important truſt, either with advantage to the public, or with comfort to themſelves.

While ſincerity and good faith in contracts are eſteemed to be neceſſary virtues in ſociety, an avowed indifference to the evident intention of a declaration, authenticated by the ſolemn ſubſcription of the hand, muſt, with irreſiſtible force, oppoſe itſelf to the teacher's influence, however earneſt he may appear in the diſcharge of his duty; as it utterly deſtroys all reliance upon the veracity of the perſon, who thus profeſſes to trifle with an obligation of ſuch high importance.

The proper officeof a clergyman of the church of England, is, if I rightly underſtand it, to miniſter to the congregation, to which he ſhall be lawfully appointed, according to a form of prayer, preſcribed by act of parliament; and, to preach the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, according to a formulary, preſcribed by the ſame authority.

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In order to be qualified for preferment in this church, it is injoined, that every miniſter ſhall teſtify, by the ſubſcription of his hand, that he believes there is nothing contained in the book of common prayer, contrary to ſcripture; and, that he is perſuaded, that all and every of the thirty-nine articles, are agreeable to the word of God.

For the purpoſe of greater ſolemnity, the clergy are injoined to read this form of prayer, with the thirty-nine articles of religion, within a ſtated time, after induction into a benefice; and, in the preſence of the congregation, again to declare their full, intire, and unreſerved aſſent to whatever doctrines they contain.

Theſe ſolemn and reiterated declarations certainly muſt be conſtrued, in the eſtimation of every man of honour and veracity, as obligatory upon the perſons who ſubmit to them; and the ſame ſophiſtry, and deluſive rhetoric, which would perſuade a man that it is allowable to accept preferment, while he entertains doubts of the truth of the articles, or of their conformity with ſcripture, would alſo lead him to conclude, that

that he can, without impiety, take the oath of allegiance to the perſon of the ſovereign, when he is perſuaded his crown is not his rightful property; or, that he might, with perfect honour and good faith, declare, that he will ſupport him with his life and fortune, at the very inſtant he is engaged in ſchemes for the ſubverſion of his government.

The contrariety between the known opinions, and ſubſcribed declarations, of ſome of the moſt learned of the clergy, at length, has raiſed a general ſuſpicion in the laity of England, that the clergy, who affect the character of orthodoxy, for intereſted purpoſes, diſſemble their convictions; and, that the late remonſtrants have only ingenuouſly confeſſed them.

The conſequences are obvious, they are indeed too melancholy to be inſiſted on, and much do I lament, as an effect of this prevailing opinion of the prevarication, of what is impiouſly ſtiled "the ſacred order," that the labours of the clergy are become an ineffectual barrier to that torrent of infidelity and profligacy, which now threatens

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to overwhelm us. Much do I fear, from ſome late movements, leſt the legiſlature ſhould, in time, be induced to declare the order itſelf, an uſeleſs burden to the ſtate.

It is not my deſign to demonſtrate that the articles of the church of England, are at variance with God's written word. It is a ſufficient argument for an unanimous petition of the clergy to the legiſlature, for the abolition of ſubſcription to them, that in the minds of an enlightened laity, they are generally eſteemed ſo. We have heard them arraigned, in the moſt ſolemn aſſembly of this nation, as contrary to ſcripture, as ſhocking to rational believers. By many they have been declared to be full of horror, and blaſphemy; and our prelates themſelves, by a ſilence which would be highly criminal, if they thought them goſpel verities, confeſs the juſtice of this charge.

But, the conduct of the adverſaries of the righteous claims of the petitioning and diſſenting clergy, is equivalent to a thouſand demonſtrations. The evaſions, which the writers in ſupport of ſubſcription have ſuggeſted, plainly imply, that the articles, conſidered

ſidered in themſelves, are utterly indefenſible; and, juſtly, indeed, may they be eſteemed ſo, by the body of the engliſh nation, as not a ſingle author of eminence, in the preſent controverſy, has even attempted their apology; while the favourite arguments urged for the continuance of the impoſition, amount only to an endeavour to prove, that ſubſcription ought, by any means, to be retained, for the purpoſe of political convenience.

But, does not this deteſtable proſtitution of the truth, adminiſter matter of triumph to the infidel? Is not the church's miniſter, by ſuch a defence, himſelf conſenting to the diſhonour of the religion of Jeſus? Does he not thereby, in fact, aſſert its ſubordination to the civil power? Does he not himſelf degrade it, into a mere engine of ſtate?

From what has been urged, it follows, as an inevitable concluſion, that if the public confidence, in the veracity of the miniſter, is annihilated, by his ſolemn and repeated atteſtations in favour of a notorious falſehood; the contempt, in which the articles

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are now univerſally holden, will be extended, by the hearer, to the ever ſacred word of God. All religion will be alike founded in convenience, and the goſpel of our bleſſed maſter thus become, in the eſtimation of the people, an exploded fable, a vain and idle tale.

Before, therefore, we preſume to aim at propagating the religion of Jeſus into other regions, we muſt effect its eſtabliſhment in the country where we live.

Before we endeavour to call the inhabitants of diſtant climates to an obedience to the goſpel, we muſt labour to ſubdue our national manners, to ſome degree of conformity with that pure and perfect doctrine, which is contained in the all-ſufficient word of God.

And, as a neceſſary means to a purer profeſſion, and a purer practice, every ordinance, and every law, whether in our civil or religious eſtabliſhment, which injoins ſubſcription to explanatory articles of faith and doctrine, muſt be utterly aboliſhed, and our liturgy thoroughly purged and reformed.

XIV.

DECEMBER 7, 1773.

It has frequently been obſerved, that every law of man, enacted in oppoſition to the prevailing diſpoſitions of a people, inſtead of operating according to the intention of the propoſer, has itſelf been obliged to give way to the irreſiſtible impulſe of thoſe paſſions, which it was intended to reſtrain.

A ſimilar obſervation will preſent itſelf, when we contemplate the fate of thoſe religious inſtitutions, which, eſtabliſhed upon the ruins of right reaſon, and every civil privilege, preſcribe a faith that ſhocks the underſtanding of mankind, or inculcate a practice in diametric oppoſition to the beſt emotions of the human heart.

But thoſe inſtitutions, whether of a civil or religious nature, which breathe a ſpirit friendly to the intereſts of man, which inculcate principles ſweetly reſponſive to the voice of reaſon, and harmoniouſly conſenting with the ſocial movements of the ſoul,

ſoul, we accept with willing heart, and bow, without reluctance, to their juſt and generous ſway.

Reſiſtleſs, therefore, may we expect, will be the progreſs of the goſpel, in that day, when every impediment to the exerciſe of our unclouded reaſon ſhall be finally removed. Relying leſs upon the aids of human power, than on the native excellence, and divine ſimplicity of her precepts; ſhe then ſhall widely extend her peaceful triumphs over the oppoſing vices of mankind, while each fallacious form of ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm, though for a time ſupported by political contrivance, or deſpotic power, ſhall, at length, retire before the heavenly ray of truth, or utterly be abſorbed in the ſplendors of her everlaſting light.

A firm belief in the truths of chriſtianity, as exhibited in the ſcriptures, leads, by a natural and eaſy progreſs, to juſt and honourable principles, to a juſt, and honourable practice; and, particularly conduces to the generation and ſupport of that noble independency of ſpirit, on which each great

and truly patriot virtue reſts, as on a rock, liable indeed to be aſſailed by the ocean ſurge, but yet aſſailed in vain.

The reſtitution, therefore, of the word of God to that ſupremacy, which it ſo juſtly claims above the precarious traditions of fallible men, immediately tends to the production of each public virtue, and the laſting eſtabliſhment of thoſe conſtitutional bleſſings, which, as engliſhmen, it is our duty to revere.

But, however intimate the connection may appear between a religious knowledge, and the public welfare, it has been inſinuated by certain emiſſaries from the epiſcopal bench, that the abolition of ſubſcription to ſyſtematical confeſſions of faith and doctrine, is a meaſure, which, if adopted by the ruling powers, would immediately tend to the annihilation of all religious principles in the people; and would, probably, end in the ſubverſion of the ſtate.

On the other ſide, it is maintained, by the generous advocates of the petitioning clergy in the houſe of commons, that the ſubſtitution of a general ſubſcription to the truth

truth of chriſtianity, as unfolded in the ſcriptures, in the place of a ſubſcription to thoſe antiquated formularies, which are now almoſt univerſally ſuppoſed to hold forth a falſe repreſentation of the goſpel, would, by unfettering the minds of men, lead to a more accurate knowledge of the ſaving words of truth; a knowledge, neceſſarily productive of a more virtuous practice; and, thus add to the ſtability of kingdoms, and the happineſs of the individuals who compoſe them.

One of the arts of controverſy, by which the advocates for the continuance of ſpiritual impoſitions have attempted to blind the eyes of the people, conſiſts, in confidently aſſerting, that no chriſtian church ever ſubſiſted without ſome confeſſion of faith held forth by its members, as the ground, or baſis of their union.

But the hiſtory of the planting of chriſtianity, as it may be collected from the acts of the apoſtles, and the epiſtles of St. Paul, ſuggeſts to us no other idea of a chriſtian church, than that of an aſſembly of perſons met together in the name of God; and pro-

feſſing allegiance, in all ſpiritual matters, to one only lord and ſaviour, Chriſt.

A ſociety, thus conſtituted, may decree whatever rites and ceremonies it ſhall judge conducive to the edification of itſelf, in faith and love; but cannot ſubmit to the introduction of any human formulary of faith and doctrine whatſoever, as the teſt of orthodox and apoſtolical belief: and this, becauſe the rule of faith and rule of life, were, fully and circumſtantially, unfolded by our divine inſtructor; and have been, with all faithfulneſs and perſpicuity, declared to us in thoſe writings of his followers, who were immediately delegated by himſelf to reduce the nations to an obedience to his laws; writings, which alone are able to make us wiſe unto ſalvation, and are ſolemnly declared by our church, to be all-ſufficient with reſpect to every point of faith and practice.

Chriſtian churches may, unqueſtionably, be diſtinguiſhed from each other, by varieties in their forms of worſhip, modes of diſcipline, or internal polity. The church of Corinth may adopt rites and ceremonies, and a form of government, which the church

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of Epheſus doth not approve. But a diverſity of doctrine, even in matters which have frequently been eſteemed fundamental, can never be demonſtrated to conſtitute, either in whole or in part, a proper ground or reaſon for this diſtinction. Every individual, in each of theſe ſocieties, however differing in ſentiment from his brethren, with reſpect to any point of faith, expreſſed in humanly diviſed formularies, may be in ſtrict communion with all the members of his own particular church, may be equally a member of Chriſt's catholic church; and, if found obedient to the moral precepts of the goſpel, will hereafter be equally entitled to his ſaviour's approbation, and the favourable acceptance of his God.

The members of ſuch a ſociety may, without controverſy, ſet apart whatever portion of their private patrimony they ſhall think expedient, for the purpoſe of engaging perſons to officiate in its religious ſervice.

It may alſo appear expedient, in ſuch a congregation, to allow an additional proviſion for the appointment of a perſon, whoſe office it ſhall be to explain the meaning,

and to recommend the practice of God's written word to the beſt of his capacity and power.

But, for ſuch a ſociety to require from its teachers, together with a ſubſcription to the ſcriptures, a ſubſcribed declaration of his belief, in any formulary of man's device, will be both impious and abſurd.

It would be impious, inaſmuch as the members of this ſociety would, by ſuch a meaſure, ſubſtitute, as much as in them lay, the precarious opinions of fallible men, in the place of that word which God revealed; and bind them, at length, upon themſelves and their poſterity, by the power of prejudice, a power, more ſtrong than fetters of braſs, or links of iron.

It would be abſurd, inaſmuch as it would reſtrain the preacher's powers in the execution of his duty; and deprive him of the opportunity of affording to his conſtituents, that information and inſtruction, which were the immediate reaſons of his appointment to his uſeful and important office.

In ſuch a caſe, he would ſign with one hand, an obligation to ſtudy the revealed, written

written word of God, and to unfold, to his congregation, each important doctrine, every ſubſtantial duty, which, in his own apprehenſion, it contains; and, with the other, he would execute a bond, whereby he engages to teach that congregation nothing, but what they underſtood, or ſuppoſed they underſtood, before they ſolicited his aſſiſtance, or advice.

But, ſubſcription to any formulary of faith and doctrine formed by man, excluſively of the impiety of ſuch requiſition, excluſively of its inconſiſtency with the acknowledged rights of proteſtants, is exceptionable for other reaſons, even in independent aſſemblies of chriſtian men, but is ſtill more exceptionable, if ſuch ſubſcription be demanded, either of the laity or clergy, in a national church.

It is poſſible, though not probable, that the members of one particular aſſembly may, for ſome ſhort ſpace of time, agree in a form of doctrine, which accurately exhibits a real confeſſion of their faith.

But, in the caſe of a national church, wherein the number of perſons, differing from

from each other in the circumſtances of natural and acquired abilities, is proportionably augmented, it is morally impoſſible that an explanatory confeſſion of faith can be drawn up in terms ſo ſimple, as accurately to expreſs the ſentiments of all. And yet, when this is not effected, the formulary fails of its deſign.

May this reflection have its weight with the preſent profeſſor of divinity, in the univerſity of Cambridge; and induce him to reconſider the ſubject of ſubſcription, before he publiſhes the ſecond edition of his "Brief ſtate of the principles of church authority!" *

When metaphyſical refinements, when ſcholaſtic differences and diſtinctions, enter into the contexture of ſuch confeſſions; to contend for the impoſition of them, as means to an uniform belief, would be to inſult the common ſenſe and reaſon of mankind.

And, may this reflection have its weight with

* This tract was publiſhed, 1773, and ſaid to have been written, as our author here ſuppoſes, by Dr. Watſon, the preſent biſhop of Landaff.

with Dr. Powell, a more vehement advocate for the ſame antichriſtian practice ! *

If ſubſcription to ſuch a formulary, be required of the clergy; hypocriſy, falſehood, avowed or ſecret infidelity, will ſpread inſenſibly throughout that order.

The melancholy effects will ſoon become too viſible in the conſequent diſſipation, and profligacy of manners, in all ranks of people; and the continuation of the impoſition, upon perſons who receive no emolument whatever from the eſtabliſhment; and, who, for a long courſe of years, have approved themſelves the beſt of ſubjects, muſt be conſidered, (after a reſpectful application has been made for its removal,) as proceeding from a deſire of exerciſing an unjuſtifiable dominion over the conſciences of

* Dr. Powell ſeems to be involved in the preceding reflection, on account of the principles maintained in his "Charge delivered to the clergy of the archdeaconry of Colcheſter, in June 1772." and publiſhed ſoon afterwards. The ſame charge is adverted to in the twenty-ſecond number of "Miſcellaneous papers" in this volume.

of chriſtians; and, eventually, may be productive of danger to the conſtitution, both in church and ſtate. Nor does it appear poſſible, that the impoſition of academical ſubſcriptions can be defended upon any principles of reaſon or utility.

It has been doubted, whether the univerſities, in themſelves, are legally competent to the exerciſe of ſuch a power; but, if this were even allowed, the requiſition in queſtion, would remain altogether impolitic and unjuſt. It tends to taint the native honour of ingenuous youth; it renders the minds of the riſing generation, familiar to the practice of hypocriſy and falſehood; and ſubjects the ſeats of elegant and uſeful literature, to the charge of maintaining illiberal and excluſive principles, unknown, even in ſtates, wherein religious deſpotiſm, and the intolerant ſpirit, moſt prevail.

To conclude this ſubject. Public virtue, public honour, with a vital religion, founded upon the ſolid rock of ſcripture, and embraced with fervour, unqueſtionably promote the public welfare.

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A meaſure, therefore, which would remove obſtructions to the univerſal prevalence of the pure and unadulterated faith of Chriſt, and the practice of every goſpel virtue; inſtead of being repreſented as deſtructive of the eſtabliſhment, and as neceſſarily leading to the ſubverſion of the ſtate, ought, in right reaſon, immediately to be adopted, as moſt likely to be productive of ſalutary conſequences to the public utility, and to the public peace.

XV.

DEFINITIONS.

MARCH 3, 1774.

THE atheiſt, is a man who denies the exiſtence, or the providence of God, and conſequently is, for the moſt part, a profligate, both in principle and practice.

The deiſt, is a perſon who admits the exiſtence,

exiſtence, and providence of God, but denies that he ever reveals himſelf to mankind, except by the voice of natural reaſon. He acknowledges him to be the creator of the world, the common father of his creatures; but, conſiders the religion of Moſes, the religion of Mahomet, and the religion of Jeſus, as alike founded in falſehood and impoſture.

Though myſelf a believer in Chriſt, upon conviction, yet, I believe that deiſm and ſound morality are not incompatible. It is thought, that there are fewer deiſts in England, than in any other chriſtian country, and that there would be fewer ſtill, were the national religion thoroughly reformed, i. e. brought back to the ſimplicity of the goſpel, as it was profeſſed in the apoſtolic times.

The jew, is a perſon who profeſſes to believe, that the almighty formed the offſpring of Abraham into a diſtinct people; that he gave them laws and ordinances by the hand of his ſervant Moſes; that he ſupported them, while obedient, in temporal

poral ſplendor and proſperity, and promiſed them ſuperior bleſſings under the reign of the great meſſiah, whom they ſtill continue to expect.

It is thought, that many jews would be converted to chriſtianity, were we not to inſiſt ſo much upon the heathen notion of a plurality of Gods.

The mahometan, is a perſon, who, believing that the creator of all things ſpoke to man by the mouth of Mahomet, conforms his faith and manners in obedience to the Koran.

The chriſtian, is a perſon who believes that Jeſus of Nazareth was the meſſiah promiſed of God; and conſiders the doctrines, which he was divinely commiſſioned to teach, as the rule of life, and the ſole foundation of his future hopes and fears. He endeavours, in every part of his demeanour, to imitate the ſpotleſs example of his maſter. He loves his maker, and loves alſo man, whom he is taught to conſider as created in his maker's likeneſs.

The papiſt, is a perſon who looks for

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the doctrines of chriſtianity, not ſolely in the ſcriptures, but alſo in the writings of the fathers, in the deciſions of councils, in the traditions of the church. In matters of doubt and difficulty, he refers himſelf to the biſhop of Rome; and, to complete his character, he cordially damns all thoſe who venture to diſſent from him.

The proteſtant, is a chriſtian, who looks for his religion in the ſcriptures only, uſing his own reaſon and his own judgment, in the interpretation of them, i. e. he diſclaims all human authority in controverſies of faith; but his chief characteriſtic is a mild, forbearing, tolerating ſpirit, which riſes into zeal, when the ſacred rights of humanity are invaded, under a pretence of orthodoxy; when he oppoſes the impoſition of penal ſtatutes in matters of religion; and when he moves for their repeal.

Diſſenters, are proteſtants, differenced from each other, by different modes of worſhip, and forms of diſcipline; but, generally concurring in aſſerting the ſupremacy of their lord and maſter, Chriſt, in religious

religious concerns, in oppoſition to the claims of fallible men.

It is to diſſenters that we are indebted for the beſt interpretations of the ſcriptures, and the ableſt defences of our faith.

The church-of-England-man, is a ſectariſt, partly papiſt, partly proteſtant. He is a proteſtant, becauſe he aſſerts the ſufficiency of the ſcriptures. He is a papiſt, becauſe he, in the ſame breath, requires aſſent to certain additions to thoſe ſcriptures. He is a proteſtant, becauſe he has ſeparated from the church of Rome, upon the plea of the right of private judgment. He is a papiſt, becauſe he refuſes the ſame liberty of ſeparation to his brethren. He is a proteſtant, becauſe he maintains the unrighteouſneſs of perſecution, when he is himſelf the ſufferer. He is a papiſt, becauſe, when opportunity offers, he has always ſhewn himſelf a perſecutor in his turn. The church-of-England-clergyman alſo is a papiſt, becauſe in his liturgy is found the athanaſian creed. He is a proteſtant, becauſe, though injoined by temporal and ſpiritual authority to recite it monthly, he

hardly ever reads it. He is a papiſt, becauſe he ſubſcribes the thirty-nine articles; and he is a proteſtant, becauſe he does not believe them.

ACADEMICAL PAPERS.

ACADEMICAL PAPERS.

I.

OCTOBER 24, 1775.

THE queſtion of public examinations, which comes on in the ſenate-houſe of Cambridge, in the courſe of the preſent term, having been miſconceived of by ſome, through the injurious miſrepreſentations of its adverſaries, it appears to be a debt owing to the public, to place it in its proper point of view.

It has been objected, that emulation, which is the principle upon which the plan is conſtructed, is a motive which ſhould not be employed in the education of youth.

The objectors ſhould conſider, that there are two modes of education, public and private. In the latter, where the youth is brought up under the eye of a father, or a tutor in a private houſe, emulation is certainly not the proper incitement to application. The firſt attempt of the inſtructor,

in ſuch a caſe, ſhould be to gain poſſeſſion of the heart of his pupil, and then to draw him on to the performance of his duty, by inſpiring him with thoſe affections which are moſt worthy of our ſpecies, viz. the deſire of uſeful knowledge, the admiration of virtue, the religious principle, the love of human-kind. But, in the caſe of public education, the means of operating upon the heart of the pupil by affectionate regard, are generally wanting. At private ſchools, indeed, it is not unfrequently found, that the pupils regard their inſtructor as their father. In public ſchools, this ſeldom happens. At univerſities, it is next to impoſſible, as experience too plainly teſtifies. A lecture for an hour each day, during half the term, upon ſubjects frequently diſguſting, which is almoſt the only communication that ſubſiſts between a tutor and a pupil in the univerſity, cannot be ſuppoſed to generate ſuch a portion of affectionate regard, as will inſure the regular behaviour of the ſtudent, in the midſt of thoſe temptations to which he is unavoidably expoſed.

Some other incentive is, therefore, required

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in univerſities, to enable the youth to deſpiſe the allurements of pleaſure, to animate him to the purſuit of ſcience, and to inſpire him with the ardour of excelling in every valuable attainment. Emulation is choſen for this purpoſe, becauſe it is a paſſion which naturally ariſes at this period of our age; and becauſe it prevails, and will prevail, unavoidably, in theſe ſeminaries, in defiance of every effort that can be employed for its extirpation.

Can it be denied, for inſtance, that the youth of Cambridge are emulous to appear well mounted at Newmarket? Can it be denied, that they are emulous to ſurpaſs each other in expenſive cloaths, and expenſive entertainments? that they are emulous; but I forbear. Where four hundred youths are educated in the ſame place; have hourly opportunities of obſerving each other's conduct; are at a diſtance from their natural friends; emancipated from the reſtraints wiſely impoſed in each inferior ſeminary; in the ardent moment of youth; and without an incentive to a more rational employment of their time; can it be a matter of

wonder, if the ſizar emulates the penſioner, the penſioner the fellow-commoner, the fellow-commoner the nobleman, in every faſhionable mode of diſſipation ?

To expreſs the intent of the propoſed inſtitution, in the conciſeſt manner : the deſign of public examinations is to turn the ſpirit of emulation to nobler and more important objects ; and there appears to be, at this moment, an abſolute neceſſity of doing ſo : for to the preſent ill direction of this ſpirit we are to aſcribe, in principal meaſure, that profligacy of manners which diſgraces the preſent generation, and threatens every ſpecies of calamity to that which ſhall ſucceed it.

One natural, and indeed unavoidable, conſequence of this inſtitution would be, the diminution of academical expenſes. But, as ſome contend, that parents and guardians have no reaſon, at preſent, to complain with reſpect to this ſubject, I will, before I enter upon other arguments, and reply to other objections, ſtate the various allowances, which, all circumſtances conſidered, appear ſuitable to each order of our youth.

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In proportion as the ſtudent exceeds theſe, I will venture to ſay, the parent or guardian has reaſon to complain.

Entering upon this taſk, I am ſenſible it may be urged, that college expenſes are different in our different ſocieties. I anſwer, the neceſſary variation is very trifling, and that no good reaſon can be aſſigned, why, in this reſpect, an intire uniformity ſhould not prevail.

I alſo would have it underſtood, that, when I ſpeak of the annual expenſes of each order, I do not mean thoſe of the firſt year of reſidence. The expenſe in furniſhing a room at many of the colleges, caution-money, and the proper equipment of the ſtudent, which are peculiar to that year, are not conſidered in the following calculations.

The orders of youth in Cambridge are, noblemen, fellow-commoners, penſioners, and ſizars. The public tuition of a nobleman is thirty-two pounds a year; that of a fellow-commoner ſixteen pounds; of a penſioner eight pounds; and of a ſizar, I believe, only four pounds.

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The annual rent of rooms in college, varies from three to eight pounds: in ſome colleges, there are a few rooms which let for ten or twelve.

The expenſe of commons to the ſizars is very trifling, ſometimes nothing; to penſioners, if they reſide the whole term, never more than twelve pounds; ſometimes conſiderably under this valuation. I ſpeak diffidently with regard to fellow-commoners; but I believe this article, in their annual expenſes, is under twenty pounds. Coals are another neceſſary article: the expenſe of theſe, at an average, may be ſtated at ſix pounds a year.

The article of butler, in the caſe of a penſioner, may be thirty ſhillings a quarter; all other articles of neceſſary expenſe, peculiar to a college, are very inconſiderable. I am certain I have ſelected the moſt material. That of the burſar ought perhaps to be added to this liſt; it is an article I do not intirely comprehend. In the caſe of the penſioner, it ſometimes amounts to thirty ſhillings in the quarter. The hair-dreſſer generally receives about twelve

ſhillings

ſhillings a quarter: the laundreſs twenty: the bed-maker about ten or twelve.

I will now endeavour to expreſs the whole ſum, which it may be proper for each order of ſtudents to expend in Cambridge annually, cloaths and pocket-money included; I will ſtate them upon the largeſt ſcale.

A ſizar, as he has frequently great aſſiſtances in college, is under no neceſſity of coſting his friends more than forty or fifty, never ſo much as ſixty pounds a year.

The allowance of a penſioner may vary from eighty or ninety to an hundred and forty pounds a year. If parents find that their ſons, however great may be their proſpects, exceed this ſum, the ſurplus is certainly ſpent in a manner, which it would be an inſult to ſuppoſe they could approve.

After all allowances for difference of rank and future expectations, I will venture to aſſert, that a fellow-commoner may creditably live at Cambridge for leſs than two hundred pounds a year. In ſome inſtances, it may be thought adviſeable to provide him with a ſervant, a private tutor, and an horſe: theſe

theſe additional expenſes cannot amount to above one hundred more.

To the expenſes of a nobleman, I aſſign no bounds.

I have only to add at preſent, that the public tutors, who are ſuppoſed to be gainers by the increaſe of academical expenſes, have, greatly to their honour, by a conſiderable majority, declared themſelves in favour of the propoſed inſtitution.

CHIRON.

II.

OCTOBER 28, 1775.

UPON reflection, I am ſenſible, that the allowance, which I ſtated as ſufficient for the creditable ſupport of the penſioner and fellow-commoner, in the univerſity of Cambridge, was calculated upon too large a ſcale. I am perſuaded, that an hundred and twenty pounds a year, ought never to be exceeded by the penſioner; nor one hundred and eighty by the fellow-commoner, even in theſe times; and that in both theſe inſtances, even

even a ſum far leſs would be ſufficient to anſwer every valuable purpoſe.

In proportion as the neceſſary expenſes are diminiſhed in the calculation, the real ones appear more alarming, and certainly call more loudly for a reform. I ſpeak to the truly ſerious, who, ſuperior to the prejudices of a party, have a real concern for the morals of the riſing generation, and will lay theſe matters to heart.

I will now proceed to conſider an objection, which derives its influence rather from the reſpectable character of the perſon who patroniſes it, than from the ſtrength of thoſe reaſons which have been hitherto offered in its ſupport.

The ——— of ———, it is ſaid, expreſſes his apprehenſions, that if public examinations were eſtabliſhed in the univerſity of Cambridge, the management of academical education would be taken out of the hands of the public tutors, and transferred to perſons, over whom they could have no influence; and, conſequently, that, by the propoſed inſtitution, the preſent ſyſtem of diſcipline would be intirely overthrown.

This

This objection has been circulated with aſſiduity; it is even offered with confidence, as an anſwer to thoſe perſons, who, judging from the large remittances annually ſent to Cambridge, that matters are not quite as they ſhould be, have expreſſed ſome ſurpriſe that every regulation hitherto projected, has been, with ſo much vehemency, oppoſed.

It may not, therefore, be unſeaſonable to delineate the outlines of the preſent ſyſtem with all faithfulneſs, and to leave the reader to determine, whether the propoſed plan is in the leaſt affected by the objection in queſtion; an objection, which already has been anſwered, to the ſatisfaction of the generality of the univerſity, in a late very able publication on this ſubject*.

In both the univerſities, the courſe of literary diſcipline may be divided into public and private. I call that public, which preſcribes the exerciſes wherein perſons of every college are indiſcriminately called to bear a part:

* See "A letter to the author of an obſervation on the deſign of eſtabliſhing annual examinations at Cambridge." 8vo. 1775.

part: private, which is injoined by the authority of each particular ſociety.

It is acknowledged, that the only public diſcipline, which is of real conſequence to youth, is that, which is preparatory to the degree of bachelor of arts; and the fact is indubitable, that the domeſtic diſcipline of every college is accommodated principally to improvement in thoſe ſtudies, to which, by the practice of the univerſity, almoſt every diſtinction of honour is annexed.

Mathematics and natural philoſophy form the principal ſubject-matter of the preparatory exerciſes and examination for the bachelor's degree; ethics, meeting with very ſlender encouragement, and the incomparable Locke being now almoſt as little honoured, at the public time of trial, as real ſcience is ſaid to be at the ſiſter univerſity.

In every private ſociety, therefore, among the firſt lectures which the pupil receives from the public tutor, are taught the elements of Euclid, the elements of algebra, then the various branches of natural philoſophy, and the abſtruſer parts of mathematics, 'till he reaches the heights of ſcience, in the term preceding

preceding his examination in the public ſchool.

It may now be demanded, what proviſion is made for the purpoſe of inſuring the perfect coincidence of the public diſcipline of the univerſity, with the private courſe purſued in each particular ſociety?

The whole proceſs of the bachelor's examination has been deſcribed in ſome late publications;* but for the ſake of general information, I will mention ſome of the leading particulars of this ſo much celebrated inſtitution.

Two perſons appointed annually from the different colleges in rotation, direct the examination, which is open to every member of the ſenate who chuſes to aſſiſt; but the determination of the relative merit of the ſtudents, is intirely, by cuſtom, in the breaſt of the appointed examiners, who are called "moderators."

Theſe perſons, notwithſtanding the mode of their appointment, which is abſolutely independent of the public tutors, think themſelves under an obligation to purſue the ſame line in the examination, which the

* See vol. ii.

the public tutors have purſued in their domeſtic diſcipline.

In this inſtance, the public tutors are not alarmed, leſt their plan ſhould be counteracted by the appointed examiners: they calmly purſue their accuſtomed courſe, and honour crowns the few, who are uniformly attentive to their inſtructions, with their due reward.

In the projected inſtitution, the form of examination is ſpecifically the ſame; but the examiners, who are to be appointed by the different ſocieties in rotation, will be ſubject to the influence of the public tutors, in a degree far ſuperior to what was poſſible in the former inſtance.

It is expreſsly provided in the graces, that the mode of chooſing the appointed examiners ſhould be left to each ſociety. The influence of the public tutors is ſuperior to all other influence, that of the maſter excepted; who, appointing them, muſt be ſuppoſed to act in concert with them; and conſequently, the examiner may either be the public tutor himſelf, or nominated by him.

If, therefore, the public tutors ſo far influence the examination, at the time of the bachelor's degree, that no alarm ariſes from the authority being veſted in different perſons, their influence would be ſtill more prevalent in the preſent inſtance.

But, when I aſſerted, that the courſe of domeſtic diſcipline is accommodated to the public exerciſes, I then did not mention, that the preſent ſyſtem of lectures in each ſociety, is more extenſive than the ſtudies, which form the ſubject-matter of examination for the bachelor's degree.

And hence, the contended neceſſity of an additional examination, to ſecure attention to the additional, and perhaps more uſeful, inſtructions, which the pupil has received in his tutor's chamber.

Beſides, the noblemen and fellow-commoners alſo, ſometimes, receive inſtructions in the chamber of the public tutor, but are never called upon by the univerſity, to give any public proof of their proficiency in learning.

Can it be then maintained, with any colour of argument, that the inſtitution of a public

public examination of noblemen and fellow-commoners, regulated according to a model universally approved, and actually subsisting; and established expressly for the purpose of securing their attention to the lectures of the public tutors, would transfer the education of youth out of the hands of the public tutors? If I did not respect the moral character of the objector, I should esteem it to be an insult upon his judgment, to suppose that he could himself believe it.

It is also to be observed, that the public tutor lectures the pensioner and the sizar, during the first year of residence, in classical learning, which it is well known the said pensioner and sizar pay little regard to, as there is no general opportunity offered them by the university, of distinguishing themselves in this branch of useful literature.

Lastly, it is to be noted, that, on account of the distance of the bachelor's degree from the time of admission, the fervour of emulation operates chiefly in the last year of residence; whereas, by an intermediate examination, an unremitted attention would be maintained, and a regular behaviour uni-

formly enſured. The contrary event has been lamented by the very perſons who moſt oppoſe the projected inſtitution.

In this inſtance, therefore, what probable argument can be alledged to ſhew, that an intermediate examination, purpoſely framed to ſecure the attention of the ſtudent to the firſt elements of ſcience, and to claſſical learning; and expreſsly reſtricted to the ſubjects lectured upon by the public tutors, would be liable to the charge in queſtion? But I am weary of combating the ſhadows of objections; of real objections they do not deſerve the name.

But, as an unqueſtionable evidence that ſomething of the kind contended for, would be uſeful in this ſeminary; I will appeal to fact.

Let any man ſurvey the preſent ſtate of ——— and St. John's college. He will perceive the latter, in conſequence of the judicious inſtitution of the late truly reſpectable matter,* not only firſt in fame, but affording a contraſt of the moſt ſtriking kind. In

[* Dr. Powell.]

In the one, he will behold each valuable greek and roman author with ardour ſtudied; each ſource of ſound philoſophy with zeal explored: in the other, the utmoſt efforts of the preſent reſpectable tutors, unable to effect the moſt inconſiderable degree of attention to their inſtructive voice.

In the one, he will behold a numerous ſet of learned perſons improving youth of the moſt reſpectable families and fortunes, in every branch of uſeful literature, themſelves hourly improved by their aſſiduity in their important truſt. In the other,— but I will not preſs the compariſon any further. Let any impartial perſon caſt an eye of momentary attention on the two ſocieties; I am confident we ſhall not diſagree with reſpect to the premiſes; let him draw the concluſion for himſelf.

CHIRON.

III.

NOVEMBER 11, 1775.

IT was the opinion of Plato, that the influence of muſic upon the manners of a people, is of ſuch importance, that no violent change can be effected in the national taſte reſpecting this amuſement, without producing a change in the government. I imagine that the rev. Dr. F—— had this ſentiment of Plato's in his mind, when he ſo gravely aſſerted, that the inſtitution of annual examinations in Cambridge would not only be attended with the ruin of the univerſity, but "might alſo ſhake the conſtitution both in church and ſtate."

It is a painful taſk to obviate every objection which, in the courſe of the conteſt, has been urged againſt the propoſed inſtitution.

However, as it is certainly due to the character of every gentleman, who has openly expreſſed his ſentiments, to examine his opinion with candour, I will, as a friend

to

to the meaſure, endeavour to evince, that our governors, both in church and ſtate, have no reaſon to be alarmed at the projected innovation.

In the firſt place, I own I have not that opinion of the importance of either of the univerſities, as to ſuppoſe that any violent alteration would take place in the conſtitution of this kingdom, were they to be either intirely aboliſhed, or intirely reformed. The univerſities have, unqueſtionably, been eminently uſeful, and ſtill continue to be uſeful, in an high degree; yet they, at preſent, form the morals and the manners of a very inconſiderable portion of our youth. Inferior ſeminaries divide this honour with them, in the caſe of thoſe perſons, who are actually admitted here; and, with reſpect to the far ſuperior numbers, who have no connection with theſe ſeats of learning during any period of their lives, they derive the principles which actuate their practice, from ſources which are but little influenced by the alterations that may, from time to time, take place in academic ſcenes. The logic of Burgerſdicius prevailed at Cambridge in the me-

mory of our fathers. The barbarous founds of Darii and Felapton now no longer grate upon our ears; the conſtitution nevertheleſs flouriſhes: and although the Principia of Newton have ſhaken down, what was ſuppoſed to be the philoſophy of Moſes, and ſwept away the vortices of Des Cartes, the church of England ſtands.

Yet theſe were alterations of far greater conſequence to our diſcipline, than that which is now contended for; let the graces, offered upon the twenty-eighth of October, 1774, be examined, with the moſt ſearching ſpirit. To the eye of any impartial man, they afford no other object, than an expedient to ſecure the attention of the ſtudent to the preſent courſe of public lectures. No new mode of ſtudy whatſoever, is recommended; and even the requiſition of a competent knowledge in the greek Teſtament is omitted, in compliance with the prejudices of ſome of the tutors, who decline the reading of it in their lectures.

The ſcheme propoſed, is indeed evidently imperfect, if it be conſidered as holding forth a perfect model of academical education. It,

It, however, appears to many judicious perſons, as the beſt, the times will bear; other improvements may be gradually introduced. If this conduces to the diminution of the expenſes of youth, ſecures ſome little degree of attention to claſſical learning, and directs the ſpirit of emulation to objects of importance, the main end is anſwered; the friends of our eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment will have no reaſon to be alarmed; the politician may ſleep in peace.

It is much to be lamented, that the reverend gentleman has not ſpecified, more particularly, in what manner the conſtitution was likely to ſuffer, from the projected innovation, as the propoſed meaſure has been invidiouſly termed. He might then have received a more circumſtantial anſwer to his objection. Let him, in the interval, between the preſent time, and the day of voting, ſtate his reaſons for an opinion, which, in the judgment of many, appears extraordinary; and, if their inconcluſiveneſs cannot be demonſtrated, at leaſt they ſhall be conſidered with candour, and the perſon of

their author treated with reſpect. A propoſal which has met with many friends, and has been ſupported, at leaſt by ſome appearance of reaſon, ought not to be condemned by the mere "ipſe dixit" of the moſt reſpectable authority. Let argument be oppoſed to argument; and let the ſenate of Cambridge reject, or eſtabliſh, by its ſuffrages, as truth, and reaſon, and expedience ſhall decree.

CHIRON.

POLITICAL

POLITICAL PAPERS.

POLITICAL PAPERS.

TO THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1780.

IN queſtions of politics, as well as of religion and morality, plain and ſimple ideas are always to be preferred to the more complex, and refined.

It appears to me a very evident truth, that the conſtant and fatal ſubjection of the majority of the commons' houſe of parliament, to the will of the miniſter, ariſes from the imperfection of its conſtitution; or, in other words, from the inequality of the repreſentation, the unwarrantable reſtrictions of that right of voting, to which every engliſhman is entitled, and the prolongation of parliaments beyond their ancient annual period.

It alſo appears to be a ſelf-evident propoſition, that a parliament, conſtituted upon the preſent plan, cannot be expected to take any part whatever, in its own reformation.

Anſwer

A new election, therefore, upon the preſent plan, affords us no proſpect of redreſs.

Upon a diſſolution of parliament, the power of delegation returns again to the people. And common ſenſe will ſurely dictate to the people, that, if the preſent plan of delegation is exceptionable, the right of altering it is, intirely and excluſively, veſted in themſelves.

The duke of Richmond, by his motion in the houſe of lords, in favour of an annual, equal, and univerſal repreſentation of the commons; major Cartwright, in "The people's barrier againſt undue influence and corruption;" the "Declaration of the right of the commonalty," ſigned "A real friend of the people;" the Weſtminſter ſub-committee, by their report of the 27th of laſt May; and the rev. Mr. Northcote, in an admirable pamphlet lately publiſhed, entitled, "Corrupt influence removed, and the conſtitution reſtored;" have pointed out plain and practicable methods of effecting this important purpoſe.

Mr. Burgh, the excellent author of the "Political diſquiſitions," has very juſtly obſerved,

obſerved, that " the people's right of annually electing deputies to repreſent them in parliament was, at the time of the triennial act, as much a part of their birthright, as the freedom of their perſons; that they had enjoyed it longer than magna charta, without violation, 'till the times of Charles the firſt; that it was, therefore, no more in the power of any ſingle king and parliament, to deprive the people of this right, than of magna charta; and that the people have now a right, at any time, to reſume their original power, and to elect only for one year, declaring, that they will not yield obedience to one act made in a ſecond year of the ſame parliament."

The higheſt honour would be due to that aſſembly of the people, in which the following propoſition ſhall be firſt adopted:

" That it is the ſenſe of the inhabitants of this county, (or city,) that ( ) perſons be appointed a committee, for the purpoſe of deliberating with the committees of like diſpoſed cities or counties, upon the ſtate of the nation; that the members of this committee be hereby authoriſed to exerciſe all

all ſuch powers as, by immemorial uſage, do belong to the commons' houſe of parliament; that they be alſo inveſted with the further power of aſſenting, in conjunction with the king, and hereditary nobility, to ſuch regulations as may be propoſed, for the purpoſe of eſtabliſhing an equal and univerſal repreſentation of the people in annual parliaments, agreeably to the ancient conſtitution and cuſtoms of this realm; and, that this commiſſion terminate at the end of ( ) months."

In your collective capacity, you are the third branch of the legiſlature of this country; your repreſentatives are your agents, conſtitutionally ſubject, at all times, to your controul; and depending ſolely, for their political exiſtence, upon your good pleaſure. A diſſolution of parliament, however, furniſhes you with the happieſt opportunity of carrying into effect, any plan which ſhall be propoſed for your deliverance. It will be a harder taſk, when, by a new election, without the proper reſtrictions, you ſhall have again given your countenance to a ſeptennial delegation of your power.

I am

I am full of anxious apprehenſions for my country; I wiſh to ſee it the favoured ſeat of liberty and virtue; and I, therefore, wiſh that you may embrace the opportunity of reformation, which the preſent hour affords you; if you ſuffer it to paſs from you, you are undone.

ALFRED.

II.

SEPTEMBER 24, 1781.

THE following ſtrictures upon a paper, which lately appeared in one of the public prints, are ſubmitted to the conſideration of my countrymen, becauſe ſuch paper evidently tended to miſlead them, with reſpect to the queſtion of annual parliaments, and thereby to divert their attention from the proper ſources of all our grievances..

The writer, indeed, very juſtly obſerves, that the ſtatute of Edward the third enacts, that parliaments ſhould be annually held, not annually choſen; but, with reſpect to the ſubſequent aſſertions in that paragraph, they are either (I will not ſay intentional)

miſrepreſentations of facts, or facts which are nothing to the purpoſe. I will, therefore, enter a little into the queſtion, and anſwer, methodically, to every aſſertion of this writer.

Parliaments, in the early times of the conſtitution, ſat for the redreſs of grievances, general and particular, as well as for the fabrication of laws; and, therefore, could not be intermitted for more than a year, without ſubſtantial injury to the people.

Yet we find they were intermitted, as appears from that ancient book, the "Mirror of juſtice," in which I read as follows:

"The ſecond abuſion of the law is, that whereas parliaments ought to convene for the ſalvation of the ſouls of treſpaſſers, and this at London, and two times in the year, they now adays meet but ſeldom, and at the will of the king, for aids and gathering of treaſure."

To remedy this grievance, the ſtatute of Edward the third was enacted; there was no occaſion to add, that a new parliament ſhould be annually ſummoned, becauſe the preſent grievance of ſucceſſive ſeſſions of the

the ſame parliament did not then exiſt. I ſpeak not matter of opinion, but of record. The writs for ſummoning knights and burgeſſes to parliament, during almoſt every year of the firſt Edward, are ſtill in exiſtence, as well as the returns. From theſe it is evident, that every parliament exiſted only for a ſingle ſeſſion; and that a new election of members took place, ſometimes, even thrice in the ſame year; or, in other words, as often as the king wiſhed to know the ſentiments, or receive the aſſiſtance of the commons.

It is alſo obvious that the people, who were obliged to contribute to the wages of parliament-men, would have eſteemed it an intolerable grievance, had parliament continued their ſeſſions for ſix or eight months, as at preſent is the caſe. The ancient ſeſſions frequently terminated in ſix weeks, ſometimes in ſixteen days; but whatever was the length of the ſeſſion, the length of the parliament was the ſame. New writs of election always were iſſued, previous to each ſeſſion, although in many of the counties and boroughs the ſame men, as is apparent from Prynne's "Brevia

par. rediviva," were very frequently returned. The word "prorogation" in the modern ſenſe of the term, was utterly unknown. The king, indeed, ſometimes deferred (prorogavit) the meeting of a parliament which had not aſſembled, to a more diſtant day than was mentioned in the original writ of ſummons; but there is no inſtance of a parliament called, and aſſembled, which after having actually entered upon buſineſs, was diſmiſſed and then reaſſembled, that is prorogued, in the modern ſenſe of the term, until the flagitious times of the ſecond Richard.

In ſubſequent periods of our hiſtory, princes, who harboured deſigns hoſtile to the liberties of the people, but who had not acquired the art of corrupting their repreſentatives, ſhewed the utmoſt averſion to the meetings of parliament; and, frequently, as was the caſe of Charles the firſt, attempted to reign without them. Hence the triennial act of the ſixteenth of that reign, which provided that parliaments ſhould not be intermitted for more than three years. The triennial act of William the third is toto cœlo,

cœlo, different. This, is that accurſed law, which, giving the firſt legal ſanction to the continuance of a parliament beyond a ſingle ſeſſion, introduced the ſeptennial bill, "and all our woe."

Although, therefore, parliaments now annually meet for the redreſs of grievances; yet, theſe are not the annual parliaments of our anceſtors, which the friends of the conſtitution wiſh to ſee reſtored. We know that, in the early times, parliaments met annually, or, more frequently, if occaſion ſo required; and, we alſo know, that in theſe times the duration of a parliament, and of a ſeſſion of parliament, was the ſame.

I now proceed to anſwer diſtinctly to the remaining aſſertions of this writer.

"We read likewiſe, ſays he, that in the reign of this king (Edward III.) no new parliament was called in twelve years." It is incumbent upon the writer to produce his authority for this anonymous aſſertion. I oppoſe to it, the aſſertion of that excellent citizen, Mr. Granville Sharp, who obſerves, "it is notorious that writs were iſſued to the ſheriffs, for new

elections, almoſt every year during this whole reign."*

The writer thus goes on: "In the reign of Henry the eighth, it appears, that the parliament, which was choſen in his ſeventeenth year, ſat during his eighteenth, and alſo in his twenty-fourth year, as the acts of theſe ſubſequent ſeſſions are expreſſly called, other acts of the ſame parliament." I anſwer, that although I do not find that any parliament ſat in the ſeventeenth or eighteenth year of Henry the eighth, yet I will allow, that a new parliament began to ſit in the 21ſt year of that tyrant, and that this parliament alſo ſat in his twenty-third year, and ſome years afterwards; which only proves, that Henry the eighth deſerved to loſe his head, for thus attempting to ſubvert the ancient conſtitution of his country.

The next ſentence of this writer, reſpecting what happened in the days of Richard the ſecond, is of leſs avail. He, indeed, introduced prorogations to continue the exiſtence

* See a ſmall pamphlet, entitled, "The legal means of political reformation." Third edition, 1780. p. 46.

tence of his packed parliaments, and thereby ſhewed how little he regarded the fundamental rights of the people.

Neither will the writer be thanked at St. James's, for inſiſting upon precedents originating in that inauſpicious reign; the incidents are too ſerious, and too much connected with its concluding ſcene.

With reſpect to what this writer obſerves, concerning the reigns of Henry the fourth and fifth, never was an inference deduced from more exceptionable premiſes. He reaſons merely from the omiſſion of the word "new," as if it were likely that an hiſtorian would ſpecify, that a parliament was new, when, excepting in the above abominable reign of Richard the ſecond, every parliament was new by unvaried uſage, from the earlieſt times of its conſtitution. Writs, as I have before obſerved, being always iſſued previous to each ſeſſion, as the following words of Prynne moſt evidently prove. The ſeſſion of the particular parliament, to which the repreſentatives of the people were ſummoned, being "once determined, they preſently ceaſed to be knights, citizens,

burgeſſes, barons, in any ſucceeding parliaments or councils, unleſs newly elected, and returned to ſerve in them by the king's new writs, as our law books, (referring to 4 Edw. IV. f. 44. Brook, Officer, 25. 34 Hen. VII. c. 24) and experience reſolve." *

With regard to what this writer mentions, reſpecting the reigns of Richard the third, Edward the fourth, and Henry the ſeventh, it is ſufficient to obſerve, that theſe inſtances were temporary deviations from a general rule; innovations in the conſtitution, introduced in the worſt of times, for the worſt of purpoſes, and by the worſt of kings; whereas ſeſſional parliaments, that is, parliaments newly elected for the occaſion, and enduring only for a ſingle ſeſſion, which alone can be truly expreſſive of the nation's ſenſe, were the uſage of the conſtitution in its pureſt times; and muſt be always pleaſing to thoſe monarchs, who, imitating

* See Prynne's "Brief regiſter of parliamentary writs." firſt part, p. 334. quoted, by Mr. G. Sharp, in his laſt cited tract; p. 54; and in his "Declaration of the people's natural right. p. 167. Second edition, 1775.

imitating the example of the firſt and the third Edward, would wiſh to be eſteemed bleſſings to their country, and ornaments to human kind.

Truth always flouriſhes, where a free diſcuſſion hath previouſly prevailed. I have not the preſumption to imagine, that I could add any weight to the arguments already adduced by the excellent major Cartwright, and other writers, in favour of the ancient uſage of this country. I will only ſay, that as many reſpectable characters in the minority are known to hold a different doctrine, I wiſh they would, like him, come forward to the public, and plead their cauſe before its reſpectable tribunal. Conſcious of the rectitude of the principles I have eſpouſed, if more able combatants were wanting, I would not fear to meet the ſtrongeſt of their party, on this important queſtion. I love truth, and I love my country; and I think that, by the circumſtances of the times, every citizen is now called upon to ſupport their cauſe.

ALFRED.

III.

JULY 27, 1782.

A SPEECH AT A GENERAL MEETING OF THE ELECTORS OF WESTMINSTER.*

GENTLEMEN,

MY worthy friend, major Cartwright, having ſo ably enforced the neceſſity of a reform in the commons' houſe of parliament, and

[* Wedneſday, July 17, 1782, was appointed for a general meeting of the electors of Weſtminſter, in Weſtminſter-hall, to conſider of a petition to the houſe of commons, for a more equal repreſentation of the people, and for ſhortening the duration of parliament. Mr. Fox, and the Weſtminſter committee appeared on the huſtings; when Mr. Fox, being unanimouſly called into the chair, came forward, and addreſſed himſelf to the electors, in a maſterly and animated ſpeech, upon the occaſion. Major Cartwright propoſed three reſolutions, Mr. Sawbridge moved the petition. Theſe being unanimouſly agreed to, Dr. Jebb addreſſed himſelf to the electors in this ſpeech.

The petition, which was afterwards preſented by Mr. Fox and ſir Cecil Wray, was as follows.

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and explained the grounds and reaſons, on which the prayer of the propoſed petition is founded, it is unneceſſary for me to add any

To the hon. the commons of Great Britain in parliament aſſembled.

The humble petition of the inhabitants of the city and liberty of Weſtminſter.

Sheweth,

THAT the preſent diſproportioned and inadequate repreſentation of the commons of this realm, and unconſtitutional duration of parliament, are grievances of ſo great magnitude as to require immediate attention and effectual redreſs.

That your petitioners do farther beg leave to ſuggeſt, that the obſervance of a due proportion of repreſentation throughout the kingdom, is not only the natural, true, and conſtitutional, but the moſt ſimple and practicable mode of correcting the preſent defects in the national repreſentation; and the only ſpecies of reform, that can either render general juſtice, or give general ſatisfaction, or afford a complete ſecurity for the future purity of this branch of the legiſlature.

And your petitioners humbly truſt this houſe will be pleaſed to conſider, that in the ſubject of this petition is included all that can be dear to citizens and to men.

Your petitioners humbly intreat this honourable houſe to take the premiſes into its conſideration, in full expectation that this honourable houſe will beſtow its ſerious attention to their complaints, examine their claims with impartiality, and finally afford its utmoſt aid in obtaining juſtice.

And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.]

any thing, to what he has ſuggeſted on theſe ſubjects.

A queſtion, however, may be aſked, in what manner will it be neceſſary for you to act, in order to carry your wiſhes into effect?

In the firſt place, it will be neceſſary to render the ſigning the petition as general as poſſible.

I would recommend to you, ſtudiouſly to inquire into, and thoroughly to comprehend, the nature of the reform you demand; examine into the grounds and reaſons of the petition; and if you approve its prayer, teſtify your approbation by your voluntary ſignature. I would not, on any account, wiſh you to ſign what you do not comprehend; nor to be induced to ſupport the petition from any other principle, than a firm perſuaſion of the propriety of its prayer. Copies will be diſperſed in proper places. A due degree of attention will not be wanting in your committee; but, if you wiſh ſucceſs, you muſt yourſelves appear zealous in the cauſe. It is neceſſary that the ſignatures be numerous, otherwiſe we ſhall give efficacy to the argument uſed againſt us in the houſe of

of commons, in which it was aſſerted, that the reformation requeſted, is not the wiſh of the people.

A ſecond method, by which an unarmed people can effect a conſtitutional purpoſe, is, by perſeverance and a manly firmneſs, in the mode of urging their requeſt.

It is your duty, if you be perſuaded of the juſtice of your cauſe, to declare repeatedly and ſteadily in the ear of parliament, that no conſideration will prevail with you to ſuſpend your exertions, until you have obtained ſubſtantial juſtice; and that nothing, but the conceſſion of your conſtitutional demands, can induce you, without murmuring, to bear thoſe numerous taxes, which, unleſs you be fairly repreſented, can by no means be equitably impoſed. It is my hope; it is my expectation, that, in a ſhort time, one cry will go through the land; and that the voice of the people will be loud and univerſal from every quarter of the kingdom; that the language of every conſtituent to every repreſentative will be, "Reſtore the conſtitution of our country."

A third

A third mode, which will aſſiſt you in effecting your purpoſe, is, to watch diligently who thoſe men are, that uniformly in parliament ſupport your cauſe, and who they are, that have the confidence to oppoſe it; affording to thoſe who ſupport it, the fulleſt evidences of your approbation; and treating the opponents of your juſt and righteous claims, with thoſe marks of your diſpleaſure, which their unconſtitutional and unworthy conduct deſerves. Be aſſured that public cenſure, for I do not mean to counſel you to any illegal act, is a powerful weapon, which cannot be wreſted from you, by any machinations of your adverſaries. The moſt exalted peer, however he may pride himſelf in the diſtinctions he enjoys, however elevated he may eſteem his ſtation above the common maſs of the people, cannot eaſily conſole himſelf, under the loſs of their approbation and favour. This method, gentlemen, of carrying your purpoſe into execution, is perfectly agreeable to the genius of the engliſh conſtitution. The power of taxation ultimately reſides in the engliſh commons; by this power, the people controul the

the crown, and this power is delegated to their repreſentatives; but, the power of cenſure the people ſtill retain, and thus are enabled to retain their repreſentatives, when fairly choſen, within the limits of their duty.

With reſpect to the prayer of the preſent petition, you will obſerve, it is expreſſed in the moſt general terms; it requeſts nothing ſpecific; this was concerted, in order to obviate that diverſity of ſentiment which muſt neceſſarily take place, before the ſubject has been properly diſcuſſed. We ſtate, becauſe we all feel the grievance; we leave the conſideration of the remedy to parliament, truſting that parliament will explore what is juſt and equal, and do what juſtice ſhall require. I have no occaſion to inform you, that a noble and extenſive plan for an equal, annual, and univerſal repreſentation of the commons, was propoſed in the upper houſe of parliament, by that diſtinguiſhed patriot the duke of Richmond. To that plan, which correſponds alſo to the idea of major Cartwright, I intirely aſſent. Yet, though attached to the idea of annual elections, I can, with

with perfect conſiſtency, join in the preſent petition to the houſe of commons, to take the matter into their ſerious conſideration; while, at the ſame time, thoſe who are equally attached to triennial parliaments, may, with equal conſiſtency, unite in the ſame requeſt.

I muſt farther obſerve to you, that the preſent is a moment ſingularly favourable to our views. There is a general diſpoſition throughout England, to concur in this ſalutary work; and we have alſo at the head of public affairs, a ſet of men who have profeſſed and manifeſted a zealous attachment to our cauſe. It is with heartfelt ſatisfaction that I requeſt you to turn your attention to that exalted character, the duke of Richmond, who may, in a manner, be ſaid to live only to effect this great, this important purpoſe. We have alſo the expreſs declarations of the earl of Shelburne, as may be ſeen in his letter to the county of Wilts; wherein he declares, that the people of England have a right to an annual election of their repreſentatives, and an equal repreſentation, founded upon an higher authority than any

act

act or acts of parliament can confer. We have, therefore, a right to conclude, that a nobleman, who ſo ſolemnly declared his ſentiments, in the face of the people, will, now he is poſſeſſed of power, ſteadily ſupport our equitable and conſtitutional demand. We have alſo a right to declare, that if he fails in gratifying our reaſonable expectations, he will juſtly incur that public cenſure, the nature of which I have before delineated, and loſe all title to the eſtimation of his fellow citizens. In ſuch circumſtances, the moſt ſplendid diſtinctions of office will afford a very imperfect conſolation to the earl of Shelburne. I will alſo mention another worthy character, now in power, and attached to your cauſe; I mean the illuſtrious ſon of that illuſtrious ſtateſman, the earl of Chatham. He has already merited much of his country, by moving for the appointment of a committee to conſider our requeſt.

With all theſe proſpects, you will be wanting to yourſelves, and your poſterity, if you do not manifeſt your attachment to your excellent cauſe, in the manner I have

deſcribed. Sign the petition; recommend it to your neighbours; and declare thoſe who are againſt it to be unworthy of your confidence. Be aſſured, if you will yourſelves properly ſupport it, no human power can prevent your ſucceſs. The repreſentation of the people, is the excluſive concern of the people. To the houſe of lords, particular offices and powers are aſſigned, with which the people cannot with propriety interfere: but, with reſpect to the houſe of commons, their buſineſs is your buſineſs, their rights your rights. I will aſk you, is it reaſonable that you ſhould be obliged to pay taxes, without being poſſeſſed of a ſufficient controul over the perſons who impoſe them? At preſent you have no controul. The diſproportion in the repreſentation of this country, the length of our parliaments, and the depredations committed, in various periods of our hiſtory, upon the right of ſuffrage, have utterly deſtroyed the ancient conſtitutional connection between the houſe of commons and the people. The majority of that houſe are no longer the repreſentatives of the commons; they

they are the dependents of the nobles, the creatures of the crown. I will alſo aſk you, if you, who are ſo immediately concerned in this great queſtion, will not exert yourſelves, can you expect that the king, that the lords, that the houſe of commons, that corrupt body, which is the propoſed object of the reform, will effect it for you? I once more, therefore, recommend to you a firm, decided, perſevering, but yet pacific conduct. Peaceful means will be ſufficient for your purpoſe: but zeal will be required; and alſo a firm determination to honour, with your approbation and confidence, only thoſe of your repreſentatives, who, by a uniform, ſteady, and conſiſtent conduct, ſhall manifeſt a warm attachment to your cauſe.

IV.

AUGUST 9, 1782.

A FRIEND to peace, and the rights of mankind, who entertains the higheſt reſpect for Mr. Middleton's principles and character,

cannot help expreſſing his ſurpriſe at the encouragement he has afforded to the ſcheme of reviving the odious and abominable meaſure of ſhip-money, in the county of Suffolk; a meaſure, equally unconſtitutional and impolitic, and fraught with danger to that cauſe, which Mr. Middleton's principles naturally lead him to ſupport. Can it be conſtitutional, to encourage a mode of raiſing money on the ſubject, for the due application of which, the miniſter will not hold himſelf reſponſible to parliament? Can it be politic, to open a ſubſcription for the purpoſe of raiſing a force, without the power of directing its exertion, and which, in all probability, will be exerted in the proſecution of the american war? I am myſelf an enthuſiaſt with reſpect to the idea of upholding the naval power of England. I am jealous of a ſtanding army. I ardently wiſh that no other landed force was known to this country, than what the voluntary ſpirit of its inhabitants would ſupply, and this, officered, neither by the lord lieutenants, nor the crown. I am perſuaded, that it is next to an impoſſibility, for the generous heart of an engliſh

ſailor,

ſailor, to harbour a thought that is hoſtile to the liberties of his country. I therefore have no apprehenſion of danger from any multiplication of our naval reſources; but the projected mode of collecting the ſupplies for an increaſe of our naval ſtrength, is juſtly reprehenſible.

To a perſon who conſiders the ſigns of the times, this meaſure ſuggeſts the idea of its being propoſed for the purpoſe of diverting the counties from the plan of parliamentary reformation; and, under a ſpecious appearance of raiſing a force to oppoſe the power of France and Spain, it ſecretly aims at the farther perſecution of our american brethren; at the ſame time, that the ſemi-compulſory meaſure of levying the contribution, by an unequal tax, not upon the ability and real reſources, but the ſpirit of the country, bears too much reſemblance to the loans and benevolences of former times to be haſtily adopted by the friends to freedom and the conſtitution. If the idea ſhould be followed in the other counties, (and I hear a ſimilar movement is intended in the county of Devon,) I ſhould wiſh to ſee it puſhed, though upon a very different plan,

in the kingdom of Ireland. I would wiſh its inhabitants, according to their abilities, to contribute for the purpoſe of their external defence. I would wiſh them to build ſhips of war for the purpoſe of protecting their trade; but, to retain the power of nominating their commanders, and directing their deſtination. I would wiſh Scotland to purſue the ſame line of conduct. I would wiſh to behold that long oppreſſed country once more reſpectable, and owe its ſecurity to the native virtue and valour of its ſons.

A few years ago, it gave me a very ſenſible concern, when I beheld that patriot nobleman, the duke of Rutland, exhauſt his eſtate of its proper ſtrength, the flower of that youth who cultivated his fields, and, at the ſame time, increaſe that influence of the crown, which threatens the extinction of our freedom. The ſame exertion, employed in diſciplining that youth, under officers choſen by themſelves, would have ſet a noble example of an independent ſpirit to his country. His name is mentioned as a ſupporter of the preſent meaſure.

I rejoice, however, that ſome of the moſt re-

reſpectable gentlemen of a county, to which I retain a partiality that will end only with my life, diſapprove of this meaſure, and ſee it in the ſame light that I do. Had I been preſent at the place of meeting, I would have conjured my fellow citizens to conſider the natural conſequences of their conduct. I would have urged them to have evidenced their patriotiſm, not by the offer of their purſes, but the proffer of their perſons in the tented field. I would have exhorted them to have imitated the illuſtrious example of our ſiſter kingdom, to have expended the amount of their ſubſcriptions in the purchaſe of arms, and to have employed their vacant hours in learning their uſe. I would have called them to reflect, that their firſt care ſhould be to reſtore independency to parliament, and to ſet their country free. In ſuch circumſtances, the conſciouſneſs of freedom would ſuggeſt the proper means of defence, would animate them to every ſpirited exertion, as they then would enjoy, what at preſent they do not enjoy, a conſtitution and a country truly worthy their ſupport.

ALFRED.

V.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF LONDON AND WESTMINSTER.

AUGUST 10, 1782.

IT is confidently aſſerted, that the buſineſs of ſhip-money is to be brought forward in the counties; and that, by this odious meaſure, an attempt will be made to delude the nation into the further proſecution of the american war. That war, for the future, is to be intirely naval, which, by the diſtreſſes it occaſions, will equally oppoſe the prayer of your late petitions, ſo ably ſupported by Mr. Fox; and equally gratify that malignant ſpirit, which has ſo long troubled this country. If the gentlemen of Suffolk and Devonſhire, be fond of ſhipbuilding and arms, let them build private ſhips of war; let them raiſe volunteer corps to defend their coaſts. They will then ſet a generous and uſeful example to their country: but the preſent project is unconſtitutional, illegal, invidious, oppreſſive, and abominable,

abominable, in whatever light it is viewed; and, however reſpectable may be the party, who was firſt perſuaded to recommend it, ought to be warmly and ſteadily oppoſed by every friend to his country, and the liberties of mankind.

Be upon your guard, therefore, againſt the ſeducers; upon no account, imitate an example ſo dangerous to your liberties, and ſo deſtructive of every expectation of peace. It is clearly perceived by your enemies, that the american war is odious to the nation, and that you are unwilling that any more taxes ſhould be levied on you, by parliamentary authority, for its ſupport. It is, therefore, propoſed (for you may perceive, from a paragraph in a late paper, that this is a deep laid ſcheme,) that the navy of England, ſhould, in part, be ſupported by voluntary ſubſcriptions, under the ſpecious pretext of aſſerting England's glory, and maintaining its honour againſt France and Spain; but, with the real deſign of attempting, by a deſperate effort, utterly to deſtroy the commerce of America, and thus reduce her to the neceſſity of relinquiſhing her

her claim to that independence, which is equally neceſſary to the eſtabliſhment of american and engliſh freedom.

Away with thoſe ſhades that veil the real ſubſtance! Lord B— and lord M—— ſtill ſway the counſels of the cabinet;

" Aliuſque et idem naſceris."

There is great reaſon to believe, that the oſtenſible miniſter only is changed, that the real miniſter is the ſame.

HAMPDEN.

VI.

TO THE INHABITANTS OF LONDON AND WESTMINSTER.

AUGUST 14, 1782.

IN order to render palatable the projected meaſure of levying ſhip-money, upon the long-deluded and inſulted inhabitants of this iſland, an idea is induſtriouſly propagated, that the american war is finally cloſed. It will not be foreign to our purpoſe, to inquire a little into the ſtate of the fact.

The

The eighth article of the treaty of amity and commerce, concluded upon the ſixth of February, 1778, between the moſt chriſtian king and the united ſtates of North America, is expreſſed in the following terms:

"Neither of the two parties ſhall conclude either truce or peace with Great Britain, without the formal conſent of the other firſt obtained; and they mutually engage not to lay down their arms, until the independence of the united ſtates ſhall have been formally or tacitly aſſured, by the treaty or treaties that ſhall terminate the war."

When the concluſion of this treaty was authenticated, hoſtilities inſtantly commenced between France and England.

The avowed object of France, therefore, in the preſent war, is to eſtabliſh the independence of America; the purpoſe of England in the war, is to oppoſe its eſtabliſhment.

Had the meaſure, recommended by Mr. Fox, been adopted in the cabinet, the object of the war would have been inſtantly changed.

changed. It would then have been evident, that the king had acceded to the prayer of your petition; it then would have been evident to all Europe, that the king "had relinquiſhed intirely, and for ever, the plan of reducing your american brethren to obedience by force."

In ſuch circumſtances, he might have ſuſpended or continued his hoſtile exertions on the coaſt, or continent of America, at his pleaſure. Thoſe exertions, with reſpect to their object and intereſt, would in no reſpect have been differenced from our operations, in a former war, at Cherburgh and Belleiſle. But, in all human probability, all the parties engaged in the conteſt, would, before this time, have entered upon the enjoyment of the bleſſings of peace.

As matters are circumſtanced, at preſent, not only every military operation upon the coaſt and continent of America, is levelled againſt the ſovereignty of the country; but, every exertion of our fleets and armies againſt the power of France, has, for its immediate object, the ſubjugation of your american brethren to obedience by force.

The

The ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities in the Carolinas and New-York, are a confeſſion of your weakneſs, but by no means amount to a renunciation of the principle of the war; and, even the projected direction of your force againſt their ally, in the Weſt Indies, amounts to no more than a change in the mode of carrying on the attack. I truſt, I do not draw a falſe concluſion; I would not intentionally miſlead you; recollect the immediate cauſe of the war, look back to the words of the treaty, and decide for yourſelves.

I would alſo remind you, that, in the beginning of this conteſt, an act of parliament was paſſed, and ſhips of war were ſtationed on the coaſts of New-England, to reſtrain the trade of the inhabitants "until they returned to their duty," which was defined to conſiſt in their acknowledgment of the legiſlative authority of this country. You may remember the conduct and expreſſions of the lord advocate of Scotland upon the occaſion. The ſame perſon has been lately appointed treaſurer to the navy, by the prime miniſter of England. He is a man

of

of abilities, and I have no doubt but that he will very reputably diſcharge the duties of his office. But what, I intreat you to conſider, will be the ſentiments and feelings of America upon the appointment? By a very natural aſſociation of ideas, they will inſtantly recollect the claim of England, and the manner of enforcing it.

Until we have formally renounced this claim, we muſt naturally be ſuppoſed to perſiſt in it. Every engliſh ſhip of war that now approaches the american ſhores, from the mouths of its cannon, re-echoes a doctrine, which our bayonets had before inſcribed in characters of blood.

Notwithſtanding the ſpecious pretext of maintaining the national honour againſt France and Spain, the projected plan of levying ſhip-money in the counties, muſt be underſtood by the americans, as a declaration of the miniſter's intention, to perſiſt in the plan of reducing them to obedience by force; and, muſt be productive of ſtill greater embarraſſments, unleſs by the recognition of american independence, he ſhould change the object of the war. You may remember

ber the effect of the addreſſes from Manchester, &c. at the commencement of the conteſt.—Alas! experience has not taught us wiſdom.

But we have offered independence to America, and ſhe refuſes to treat with us.

We knew, four years ago, as appears from the expreſs terms of the treaty, that America could not poſſibly treat with us, unleſs in concert with her allies.

Your miniſters have reduced matters to this ſtate: they have aſſiduouſly laboured, by every unworthy art, to detach France from America, and America from France. Attempts of the ſame nature have lately been renewed.

Your parliament have lately paſſed an act, of which it appears to be the evident intention, to divide, to delude, to deceive, and to betray. Your houſe of commons have expreſſed a wiſh for reconciliation with America, in order that the force of the nation may be employed againſt that power, to which, America, in a great meaſure, owes her preſent flouriſhing ſtate!

Do you imagine that the Americans will be

be ſo ungrateful to their allies; and, at the ſame time, ſo impolitic as to forward this idea?

What does common ſenſe dictate on ſuch occaſions? The americans, will, doubtleſs, enter into new leagues; they will aſſociate ſtill more intimately with the enemies of this country; they will eſteem every exertion of your force againſt the power of France, as directed againſt themſelves.

Inſtead of profiting by paſt experience, the natural conſequences of our former folly are urged as invincible arguments for the continuance of the war. By our prepoſterous conduct, we urged our american brethren to reſiſtance; in order to overcome that reſiſtance, we forced them into a declaration of independence; and, in the next place, compelled them to intreat foreign alliances to ſupport an independence now rendered, by our violence and outrage, eſſential to their ſafety; and, in the preſent hour, inſtead of taking the obvious methods of relieving ourſelves from the calamity of a war, we adopt every meaſure that can irritate and inflame them, or tends to cement their union with the ancient enemy of England;

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we even revive an odious, and juſtly exploded mode of levying money on the ſubject, as if we laboured to convince them, that rather than fail in our deſign of deſtroying their riſing conſtitution, we will ſubvert our own.

But, it is ſaid, the combination being actually formed, it is in vain that we look back to the ſource of our calamities; the ſword muſt now determine the conteſt. Is it thus we reaſon? Shall the extreme of injuſtice, on the part of the aggreſſor, utterly aboliſh the diſtinctive characters of right and wrong? Shall it be deemed criminal to act, in the firſt inſtance, againſt our better judgment; and an act of wiſdom, and of virtue, to perſiſt in error: and this, at a moment, when we know we can be relieved from all our embarraſſments by an act of juſtice, by a ſimple recognition of a fact? O America! liberated, triumphant, independent, nurſe of heroes, aſylum ſacred to ſuffering humanity! grateful to me it is to reflect, that in every ſtage of this calamitous conteſt, my heart has felt, my tongue has confeſſed, the juſtice of thy cauſe!

HAMPDEN.

VII.

AUGUST —— 1782.

SOME of the advocates for aſſiſting government by voluntary ſubſcriptions, whoſe candour and ſtile of writing entitle them to reſpect, have urged, that the authority of the collective body of the commons being paramount to that of their repreſentatives, the propoſed ſubſcriptions are perfectly conſonant to the ſpirit of our conſtitution.

My attention is open to an argument, which reſts upon ſo fair a foundation; but is there not ſome ſubſtantial fallacy in the form of the deduction? It is readily conceded, that the commons of England, in their collective capacity, may give and grant whatever aids and ſubſidies they think proper to the crown; and from this principle it flows, that the commons' houſe of parliament, when a fair repreſentation of the people, are authoriſed, with the conſent of the king and nobles, to impoſe taxes upon

upon the ſubject. The grant of the commons in parliament, in ſuch caſe, is the grant of the people, as every individual, either in perſon, or by proxy, is then conſenting to the grant. The nobles aſſent, becauſe their property is involved in the grant; and the conſent of the king is required for no other purpoſe than to expedite its equitable collection, by affording a legal form to a gratuitous act of the people.

But when I vindicate to the people, in their collective capacity, this power of granting ſubſidies to the crown, even independently of their repreſentatives; I muſt be underſtood to mean, that the majority only of the collective body can exerciſe this power; that previous deliberation, which cannot take place without a new delegation for this ſpecific purpoſe, muſt precede the grant; and, that the mode of contribution, muſt be regulated in ſuch a manner, that each individual may feel a perfect freedom from even the ſhadow of conſtraint: it being obvious, that if a minority were to grant aids to the crown, either generally, or even for a ſpecific purpoſe, the majority would

reaſonably be alarmed at an act, that might, eventually, ſtrike at the eſſentials of liberty, or effect the deſtruction of the ſtate. If the grant were to commence without the aſſiſtance of a general delegation, the meaſure would naturally be ſubject to all the evils, which precipitate counſels produce; and, in the laſt place, unleſs the utmoſt care were taken in the mode of contribution, individuals, who might decline, for reaſons to themſelves juſtifiable, bearing a part in ſuch ſubſcriptions, would feel themſelves expoſed to ſo many inconveniencies, as would render the meaſure equally oppreſſive, with the aids and benevolences of the Stuart times.

In order to prevent evils of ſuch ſubſtantial importance, the method, which naturally ſuggeſts itſelf, is that which our anceſtors have adopted. The object to be effected, with every circumſtance of conſequence pertaining to it, is ſolemnly debated in the great aſſembly of the nation; and, if the occaſion of the ſupply appears juſt and reaſonable; the ſupply itſelf, and the

the mode of its collection, are determined by a parliamentary vote.

From hence appears, in the ſtrongeſt point of view, the neceſſity of a fair and equal repreſentation of the commons; a repreſentation, which expreſſes their wiſh, and whoſe voice is ſtrictly the organ of their will; a repreſentation, which would enable the national ſpirit to exert itſelf with vigour and unanimity; and would convey, to the mind of every individual, a conviction, that, for the aſſiſtance he afforded to the exigencies of government, he would receive an ample compenſation in the ſecurity of his perſon, the protection of his property, the advancement of commerce, and in the permanent glory and proſperity of his country.

The ſubſcription, which commenced under the auſpices of the earl of ——, in the county of Suffolk; and which, with every unworthy artifice, he is ſtill ſuppoſed to promote, bears no reſemblance to what I have deſcribed. It is partial, unjuſt, unconſtitutional, and dangerous in the extreme. Its object was evidently to delude

the nation into a vigorous renovation of the american war, and to add ſtrength to an adminiſtration founded upon favoritiſm, in oppoſition to the wiſhes of the people. A committee, appointed by a ſingle county, preſumed to dictate the object of the aid, and to regulate the form, by which it was to be levied on the inhabitants. The members of that committee, by preſſing the ſubſcription from houſe to houſe, in a manner equally unprecedented and indecent, ſcarcely permitted, to the alarmed citizen, the power of refuſal. Letters were written to every county in England; the ſheriffs were urged to aſſemble the inhabitants to co-operate in an act, which ſuperſeded the authority of the commons' houſe of parliament, and anticipated the judgment of the great aſſembly of the nation. My indignation riſes at every recollection of the paſt; but I am alarmed, beyond meaſure, when I reflect upon what I ſuſpect to be intended.

When the artful machinations of lord ———, co-operating with the inclinations of the ———, had driven that accompliſhed ſtateſman, Mr. Fox, from the ſeat of power, an

an opportunity was afforded to the preſent miniſter, of attempting the proſecution of thoſe meaſures, which he avowed in the beginning of the year 1778. The failure of the ſcheme of recruiting the navy by voluntary ſubſcriptions, has not, I am inclined to believe, abated his ardour for the continuance of the american war. The offer of independence, although it is not to be finally eſtabliſhed 'till the ratification of a general peace, may poſſibly be urged as an inſtance of England's diſpoſition to terminate the conteſt; and arguments may be drawn, from the alledged unwillingneſs of the houſe of Bourbon to accede to equitable terms, for a freſh exertion of the ſpirit of this country. In theſe circumſtances, there may be reaſon to apprehend that the meaſure of raiſing ſupplies, by voluntary aids, might receive the ſanction of a corrupt parliament; and the people be called upon, under the pretext of ſupporting the glory of England againſt its ancient enemies, to continue a war, of which the real object is the ſubjugation of our american brethren to obedience by force. Againſt this deluſion, this unjuſtifiable pro-

cedure, this unconſtitutional ſurrender of the eſſential powers and privileges of parliament, I would wiſh my countrymen to be prepared. It is an act, which cannot be legalized by the conſent of all the conſtituent parts of the legiſlature; it would amount to a ſubverſion of the conſtitution; and the government, by ſuch an act of treaſon, would be utterly diſſolved.

HAMPDEN.

VIII.

TO ANTI-HAMPDEN.

AUGUST 23, 1782.

SIR,

You have certainly choſen a moſt unfortunate ſignature to your letter; and, what is more material, have not attempted to anſwer a ſingle argument of the writer you oppoſe. The demonſtration of the aſſertion, therefore, " that notwithſtanding the ſpecious pretext of maintaining the national honour againſt France and Spain, the ſubjugation,

gation of America to obedience by force, continues to be the real object of every military arrangement," remains in full force. I now will addreſs myſelf to the gentlemen, whoſe cauſe you defend.

Under the adminiſtration of lord North, the american war was adjudged, by the ſenſible part of the community, and, I believe, eſteemed by a majority of yourſelves, to be impolitic and unjuſt. Under the adminiſtration of lord Shelburne, hath any event taken place, which has changed its character? Have we, by any public declaration, diſavowed its primary object and intent? And yet, with an eagerneſs ſcarcely inferior to that which Liverpool and Mancheſter expreſſed at the commencement of the conteſt, you embrace the idea of the miniſter, and come forward with a zeal, as if you wiſhed for a renewal of thoſe barbarities, which have ſo much diſgraced the engliſh name, and may eventually prove the ruin of the engliſh nation.

If the original conteſt, on your part, was unjuſt, the interference of France in ſupport of America has not altered the nature of the contention. Until you have made the

the proper reparation; and the only reparation you can make, in your preſent circumſtances, is, the recognition of that freedom and independency, which, with unnatural arms, you ſtill endeavour to deſtroy.

It is in vain you urge, that terms of peace have been offered, and that theſe terms have been rejected. The terms you offered could not be accepted, without a violation of that good faith, which I truſt americans will be ever ſtudious to preſerve. You, as yet, have offered no terms, which men of honour could accept; the war ſtill ſtands upon its primitive foundation; it is a war, which denominates us guilty in the ſight of heaven, and deteſtable in the opinion of mankind.

If you really are penetrated with a ſenſe of your danger; if it is the real object of your exertion to manifeſt a zeal for your country's honour, as well as to ſecure yourſelves from the attacks, to which your ſituation expoſes you from a much injured and inſulted nation; arm yourſelves like men prepared to abide the combat; ſhew your zeal for the conſtitution, by acting in conformity to its ſpirit; your affection for your country, by

by complying with its laws. "It is the duty of all freemen to have arms,"* "arms of defence and peace,"† "under peril of fine:"‡ "and not only to be armed, but to be expert in arms."‖ "You that be lieutenants and gentlemen of command in your counties, I require you to take care that the people be well armed, and in readineſs upon all occaſions."§

I profeſs and feel the greateſt reſpect for your worthy ſheriff. I am ſatisfied he would not knowingly act in an unconſtitutional manner. He was willing to comply with the requiſition of many perſons, juſtly reſpectable. But the fact cannot be controverted, "that your county hath been ſummoned, for the expreſs purpoſe of levying money for the public ſervice, without conſent of parliament." It is in vain you urge, that the propoſed mode of levying the money is by voluntary ſubſcription; and, that, upon refuſal,

* Forteſcue De laudibus legum anglicanæ: c. 44.
† Bracton, lib. iv. c. 4.
‡ N. Bacon, p. 64.
‖ 33 Hen. viii. c. 9.
§ Queen Elizabeth to both houſes of parliament.

refuſal, the party applied to, is ſubject to neither fine nor impriſonment. I will allow, that upon a refuſal to comply with the demand of your committee, the party applied to is not attached by his perſon, or by his goods; but he is attached, more effectually, by his fame. The ſubſcription is not voluntary. When the members of your committee make their progreſs through the country; when they go from houſe to houſe, requeſting the frequently alarmed inhabitant, to open his purſe in ſupport of his country and his king; when the pleas of England's preſent danger, and of England's priſtine glory, are held forth, as the reaſons of ſo unuſual an application, it is not an eaſy matter to decline complying with the importunate demand, particularly when, as your defender Anti-Hampden expreſſes it, thoſe perſons cannot be reputed the "friends of government," who diſapprove your plan.

In a future letter, I may perhaps enter upon that part of the conduct of Mr. Fox, which I perceive is unpleaſing to Anti-Hampden, but which, I am confident, reflects the brighteſt luſtre on his character. For the preſent, I will only obſerve, that the

the "argumentum ad verecundiam" may be a ſtronger motive for a gentleman to enter his name upon your ſubſcription liſt, than either fines or impriſonment; that it may frequently ſilence, where it does not convince: that it may oblige him to a compliance as effectually, as a piſtol from an highwayman, or a cutlaſs from a footpad, at the ſame time that he retains the moſt unfavourable opinion of the parties who apply to him, and a full conviction of the illegality of their deſign.

HAMPDEN.

IX.

TO PHILO-ALFRED.

AUGUST 26, 1782.

THERE is no occaſion for argument to convince me, that you are a friend to the conſtitution of this country; and that the continuation of the american war, is a meaſure which would be odious in your eyes. I clearly diſcern, that you are a man of probity, of truly patriot feelings. I heartily lament, that, upon the preſent point, we ſhould ſo widely

widely differ in our opinions; upon other ſubjects, I truſt, we ſhould agree.

You have very fairly ſtated how the caſe of ſhip-money ſtood in the reign of Charles the firſt. I continue fixed in the opinion, that the meaſures adopted in the counties of Suffolk and Devon are ſubſtantially the ſame. The arguments urged by Hampden, in ſupport of the aſſertion, that the preſent ſubſcription is not voluntary, amount, in my conception, to demonſtration; and, I have no doubt, are ſecretly acknowledged to be convincing, by numbers whoſe names adorn your liſt.

It is an advantage attending the raiſing of ſupplies by parliamentary vote, that the tax is levied according to a fixed rule and equitable ſtandard; and that the reaſon of the impoſition, as well as the mode of its collection, are openly canvaſſed in the great aſſembly of the nation. Sudden emergencies may require exertions, proportioned to their importance; but no emergency can be pleaded at preſent, which does not call for exertions of a very different kind.

If the war be popular, it is to be preſumed, that it will meet with parliamentary ſupport.

ſupport. If the annual ſupplies of parliament be inſufficient, I know not any conſtitutional reſource, to which the king can, with propriety, apply.

To have recourſe, in ſuch a caſe, to what are termed the voluntary gifts of the ſubject, is a dangerous precedent, particularly during the prevalence of general diſtreſs and diſcontent; and, at a moment, when the perſon who is conceived to be the ſole arbiter of peace and war, hath ſo lately manifeſted a ſteady purpoſe of perſiſting in the plan of ſubjugation, by calling into his counſels, one of the primary adviſers, and moſt determined abettors of the meaſures we lament.

I will now purſue my argument, according to the arrangement which your letter hath preſcribed: you ſay, "the intention of the meaſure now adopted by the county of Suffolk, is to ſtrengthen our navy by voluntary exertions." I anſwer, that if this was the intention of the county, care ſhould have been taken, by the committee, to have made that intention, the rule of their conduct. By urging the ſubſcription from houſe to houſe, the exertions have ceaſed

to

to be voluntary; they are the effects of a proceſs, not leſs compulſory, in many inſtances, than if the money had been raiſed by an armed force; a virtuous parliament would accompliſh the ſame purpoſe much more effectually, by reducing the land forces of the kingdom, the ready inſtruments of tyranny, and converting a proportionable part of the ordinary ſupplies, to the eſtabliſhment of the navy upon a truly reſpectable foundation.

As to "convincing the houſe of Bourbon of our determination to reſiſt, &c." it would be much more prudent, and more honourable, to convince the world, in general, by the immediate recognition of american independence, that we are diſpoſed to give way to the dictates of ſound policy, and to the demands of juſtice, agreeably to the idea ſo ably ſupported by Mr. Fox.

"The navy of England," you ſay, "was ſhamefully neglected by a late adminiſtration." Reform the commons' houſe of parliament, and no adminiſtration will venture hereafter to neglect the navy, the proper bulwark of England. As matters ſtand

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at preſent, a naval miniſter, like the earl of Sandwich, may ſquander and miſapply more of the naval reſources in twelve months, than your county will be able to raiſe in twelve times that number of years. In anſwer to my queſtion, " Can it be conſtitutional to raiſe money on the ſubject, for the due application of which, the miniſter will not hold himſelf accountable to parliament?" You aſſure me, " that it never was intended to ſuffer one ſhilling of the money to paſs into the hands of government." You have acted wiſely; by that ſalutary caution you have certainly obviated one objection; but many other, and, ſome of them equally important, ſtill remain.

You proceed, " ſo far from diverting the attention of the counties from parliamentary reformation, I rather hope it will lead them to topics ſo well worthy of their conſideration." Why then did the friends of parliamentary repreſentation, preſent at your meeting, neglect ſo fair an opportunity? And why has Devon followed your example, and been ſilent? I preſume it was, becauſe the minds of men were preoccupied by other ideas, that is, were

diverted, perhaps, deſignedly, from paying a proper attention to that neceſſary reform.

You aſſure me, " that you believe the american war is at an end." I give you full credit for the ſincerity of your aſſertion, as I believe you to be ſtrictly an honeſt man; but what are the grounds and reaſons of ſuch perſuaſion? It is " founded upon the declaration of the miniſter, on the laſt day of the late ſeſſion."

Suppoſe he ſhould deceive our expectation, " we muſt then drive him from his elevated ſtation." Supported by the late adminiſtration, ſupported in the cloſet, he will not eaſily give way. We have as yet not conceded to America either part of her celebrated alternative; we have neither recognized her independence, nor withdrawn our fleets and armies from her coaſts. The war, therefore, ſtill ſubſiſts; I own, with diminiſhed vigour on our ſide, through a defect of power; but it ſtill ſubſiſts, inaſmuch as the capitals of two of the confederated ſtates are poſſeſſed by your troops. In theſe circumſtances, your miniſter may plead in the ear of a nation, too much open to deception; " Suppoſe the americans,

ricans ſhould be inclined to puſh their late advantages, by an attack upon our forces at New-York, muſt Carleton be inactive in ſuch circumſtances? Muſt he ſurrender the flower of the engliſh forces to the combined arms of America and France? or, muſt he reſiſt the meditated attack? Should he ſucceed in repelling the beſiegers, would it be criminal in him to take advantage of his change of circumſtances, and purſue the vanquiſhed foe?" How unfounded then is the opinion, that the american war is at an end! Can a declaration of our purpoſe, not to carry on offenſive war on the continent of America, a meaſure no longer practicable through our weakneſs, lay the americans under an obligation to ſuſpend their exertions againſt us, eſpecially when we avow, as the ground and reaſon for ſuch a reſolution, a determined purpoſe more vigorouſly to aſſail that power, to which they partly owe their preſent proſperous ſtate?

The county of Devon hath purſued a different line of conduct, but which, in my opinion, is equally exceptionable.

Its inhabitants were ſummoned " to conſider whether it was poſſible for the county, in the preſent alarming and dangerous ſtate of the kingdom, to adopt any meaſures that may be of public ſervice.

So far their conduct was not illegal; had they reſolved, after the example of Ireland, to raiſe voluntary corps, officered by themſelves, and independent of the crown, they would have acted in conformity to reaſon and the conſtitution.

But they reſolved, " that no meaſure appeared to be of more general utility, than to encourage men to enter into his majeſty's ſervice;" and this they propoſed to effect by a public ſubſcription, a meaſure as illegal and unconſtitutional as your own, and alſo more impolitic, as it tends to enhance the terms of raiſing ſeamen by the executive power.

The practice of raiſing regiments, according to the plan purſued ſome years ago, is ſtill more dangerous. But I will not enter any further into the argument at preſent; I will only obſerve, that all theſe extraordinary aids and reſources, however well intended,

tended, are diſcouraged by the ſpirit of the conſtitution, which admits of no other mode of ſupplying the exigencies of the ſtate, than by grant of the commons in parliament; and are of dangerous tendency, inaſmuch as they may be conceded without that ſolemn diſcuſſion and debate, which ought to precede every national exertion; they are further exceptionable, as they impair the ſtrength of that conſtitutional controul of the executive power, ſo neceſſary to reſtrain its exorbitances, and to prevent the verification of that well known adage, "quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur achivi."

It would be truly grateful to me, could I indulge the pleaſing ſtrain of panegyric, in theſe genuine effuſions of my heart. It is not, I truſt, through any unworthy motive that I feel, and am induced to avow, my partiality to the american cauſe. To american reſiſtance, I owe, under heaven, that I now enjoy the freedom of my perſon, the undiſturbed poſſeſſion of my ſubſtance. To her virtuous ſons, I ſhould think myſelf ungrateful, were I to withhold the only tribute in my power, the ſlender tribute of

my praiſe. I remember the time, when I gloried in the name of engliſhman. Whatever was generous, manly, and humane, ſeemed, by nature, aſſociated to that much loved ſound. I thought it virtue to believe, that my country was the peculiar care of heaven; and my ear hung delighted on the accents, that pronounced her praiſe. It is, therefore, with pain inexpreſſible, that I now behold a nation, once ruled over by the immortal Alfred, the birth-place of a Milton, an Hampden, and a Sidney, diſhonoured and degraded by deeds of foul injuſtice; ſunk in inglorious luxury and eaſe; unmindful of its former generous ſpirit; eager, at the call of deſpotiſm, to deſtroy the liberties of its more virtuous brethren; incapable of being rouſed, by the thouſand dangers that ſurround her, and the fair example of her ſiſter kingdom, to defend her own.

ALFRED.

X.

SEPTEMBER 2, 1782.

REFLECTING upon the doctrine advanced by the earl of Shelburne, at the close of the late ſeſſion, and the expreſſions, for ſome time paſt circulated by his friends, reſpecting the recovery of America; reflecting alſo upon the natural ſtrength, and the remaining reſources of this country; I was induced to turn to his celebrated ſpeech, upon the eighth of April 1778. I muſt confeſs, the opinion I entertained of the wiſdom of his counſels was not anſwered by the peruſal; but it was impoſſible for me not to acknowledge, the perfect correſpondence between his former and his preſent conduct.

I ſelect the following paſſages, earneſtly requeſting the impartial reader to peruſe the whole ſpeech, and draw the proper inferences for himſelf. He aſſerted, "that the moment Great Britain acknowledged the independence of America, her ſun was ſet."

"But ſtill, ſaid he, though no other perſon,

in this or the other houſe, or within the wide domain of the britiſh empire, thought with me, I ſhould, nevertheleſs, retain my opinion alone, and continue to oppoſe the ſovereignty of America."

Speaking of the evils that would take place, were american independence to be eſtabliſhed, he proceeds; "the remainder of America muſt fall; after this, will follow the Weſt India iſlands; and, in proceſs of time, Ireland itſelf; ſo that we ſhould not have a ſingle foot of land, beyond the limits of this iſland."

It is the buſineſs of a miniſter, "to put the proper ſprings in motion, and to call forth the ſpirit of the people," in order to induce them to open their purſes. "War only, adds he, can lead us to a ſafe and honourable peace, and to the recovery of America."

The recovery of America, therefore, was the ſole and immediate object of the earl of Shelburne, when he urged the nation to enter into an immediate war with France in 1778. In order to obtain that unchanged and unchanging object, thoſe unconſtitutional aids and benevolences are now encouraged, which the

the ſpirit and wiſdom of our anceſtors have repeatedly condemned. A remarkable inſtance of this occurred in the time of the elder James.

We know the inclinations of the ———; we know lord Shelburne. Can the predilection of the former, in favour of the preſent miniſter, be rationally accounted for, upon any other principle, than an intire harmony of ſentiment reſpecting America, which, by force or fraud, they ſtill would willingly ſubdue?

In order to further a meaſure thus deſtructive, means equally exceptionable are deviſed. The naturally open and honeſt ſpirit of the engliſh people is to be rouſed, to ſupport the declining cauſe of deſpotiſm; they are called upon, by their prejudices, and by their antipathies, to contribute liberally in defence of this country, againſt the inſidious policy of France, the pride and inſolence of Spain; unconſcious, that the ſubjugation of their american brethren to obedience by force, ſtill continues the only object of the war.

For ſeven continued years, the whole power of this country has been employed to reduce them, from a ſtate of freedom to the

ſtate

ſtate of ſlaves. Even while I am writing theſe words, the miniſters of the goſpel of peace, in every pariſh throughout the iſland, pronounce them rebels, in their ſolemn addreſſes to the majeſty of heaven; and the immediate object of every military preparation, as well as of the inſidious negotiations carrying on in all the courts of Europe, is to prevent the eſtabliſhment of that independence, which, as an engliſhman, and a citizen of the world, I cordially hope they may ſteadily and ſucceſsfully maintain.

The meaſure which Mr. Fox recommended in the cabinet, would have been an act of ſound policy, as well as of ſubſtantial juſtice. By its operation, the name of rebel would have been inſtantly changed to that of enemy. This ſingle change of the appellation, would have inſtantly changed alſo the end and object of the war. The claim of ſovereignty being renounced, the american ſtates would, from thenceforward, have been conſidered as one of the confederate powers with whom we muſt negociate, in concert with their allies, if we really wiſhed for peace. It would alſo have removed the grand obſtruc-

tion

tion to a peace. As matters are circumſtanced, at preſent, the private intereſt of the perſon who is conſtitutionally the arbiter of peace and war, is diametrically contrary to the intereſt of the people. To retain dominion is naturally pleaſing to the human mind, particularly where the love of power, incident to the ſtation, has been heightened by continual efforts to increaſe it. The bleſſings of peace, and of returning commerce, may, with equal reaſon, be ſuppoſed the natural wiſh and ardent deſire of the people. Every private intereſt of the preſiding power being reſigned, with the renunciation of the claim of ſovereignty, it would ceaſe to be his intereſt, or the intereſt of his miniſter, to perſevere in war.

I will cloſe this letter with ſome extracts from the parliamentary debates of 1778, which I recommend to the peruſal of the ſheriffs of Suffolk, Cornwall, and Devon; the former of whom, becauſe he was a worthy man, and an american born, was, therefore, ſelected to be the unſuſpecting and unſuſpected inſtrument of reviving one of the moſt

moſt odious meaſures that ever diſgraced a Stuart's reign.

The earl of Abingdon, at the cloſe of his ſpeech of February the fourth, 1778, moved the two following reſolutions for the adoption of the houſe of lords :

" Reſolved, that it be the opinion of this houſe, that the giving or granting of money, as private aids or benevolences, without the ſanction of parliament, for the purpoſe of raiſing armies for his majeſty's ſervice, is againſt the ſpirit of the conſtitution, and the letter of the law.

" Reſolved, that it be the opinion of this houſe, that the obtaining of money by ſubſcription, and under the direction of a committee of the ſubſcribers, to be applied in raiſing of men (i. e. ſeamen as well as landmen) for his majeſty's ſervice, in ſuch manner as his majeſty ſhall think fit, is not only unconſtitutional and illegal, but a direct infringement of the rights, and an abſolute breach of the privileges of parliament."

His lordſhip, in argument upon this queſtion, repeatedly declared, that there was no difference

difference between this caſe, and the caſe of ſhip-money, and quoted the following portion of a ſpeech of Mr. Humphry Sydenham in the houſe of commons in 1746. "I muſt obſerve, ſaid he, that this way of raiſing money for the public ſervice, by the ſubſcription of private men, is ſuch an encroachment upon the privileges of this houſe, and of ſuch dangerous conſequence to the liberties of the nation, that, in my opinion, it highly deſerves our cenſure."

Lord Camden declared the purpoſe of the meeting at the London tavern, to ſubſcribe money to raiſe men, to be a poſition daringly illegal, and truly alarming.

He alſo declared, "that each committee for raiſing money, to be uſed as the king ſhould in his wiſdom think fit, (that at the London tavern, and that at Briſtol,) had aſſumed a legiſlative power, and had acted in that capacity in which the parliament only were empowered to act, agreeably to the ſpirit of the conſtitution, and the meaning of the bill of rights."

Mr. Wilkes, in an able and animated ſpeech upon the ſecond of April, 1778, declared,

clared, that nothing "could be more alarming to the acknowledged rights and privileges of the houſe of commons, than the doctrine lately propagated, and the practice begun, of giving private aids, benevolences, and ſubſcriptions, for public purpoſes, to the crown without the ſanction of parliament."

Suffolk and Devonſhire, having prepared the way, go now Mancheſter, and do likewiſe.

HAMPDEN.

XI.

SEPTEMBER 16, 1782.

IN my preſent letter, I ſhall offer ſome detached hints, to the conſideration of my countrymen; they relate to points, which the wiſe and honeſt will, perhaps, think deſerving of their conſideration. The proſtituted and the fooliſh will, probably, diſregard them; or, as is too frequently the caſe with regard to more important warnings, wreſt what was intended as a friendly admonition, to their own deſtruction.

A ſtanding

A ſtanding army ought to be an object of perpetual jealouſy to the engliſh people. In order to diminiſh ſo ſalutary an apprehenſion, and to diveſt the minds of men from that mode of voluntary defence, which does ſo much honour to our ſiſter kingdom; it is propoſed, in appearance, to conſtitutionalize, if you will allow the expreſſion, the ſtanding army, by giving county names to the regiments; this meaſure, it is ſuppoſed, will perpetuate their exiſtence, and anſwer various other purpoſes, which there is too much reaſon to apprehend will be brought forward in their day.

If the people call for a reform in the commons' houſe of parliament, the cry of innovation is violent and immediate, although it be evidently the intention of the friends of that neceſſary meaſure not to innovate, but to reſtore. If a meaſure be ſuggeſted, which tends to increaſe the crown's enormous influence, the objection of innovation is utterly diſregarded; though, in ſuch caſes, every innovation is truly dangerous, inaſmuch as poſitive evil is not only introduced, but a precedent eſtabliſhed, of which the conſequences

have

have an extent, even beyond the expectations of the original projectors of the miſchief.

For theſe, and various other reaſons, my countrymen, when you hear of county names being proffered, in order to diminiſh your ſalutary horror of that ready inſtrument of deſpotic power, a ſtanding army, be alarmed; and be not ſeduced into an opinion of the innocence of miniſters, becauſe you may hear that the duke of Rutland and Mr. ſecretary Townſhend ſuggeſted and approve the meaſure. It is the practice of the enemies of freedom to employ popular names, as inſtruments of deluſion. When your chains are rivetted, they will uſe leſs ceremony. You remember the hiſtory of Samſon and Delilah. Every blandiſhment was practiſed 'till the important ſecret was obtained; but when he awaked ſhorn of his ſtrength, his power of reſiſtance being departed from him, we are told that ſhe began to afflict him; and that ſhe delivered him with inſult, into the hands of his oppreſſors.

In the time of James the firſt, benevolences were requeſted in all that ſoft and ſilken language, which kings and their miniſters

niſters can at times employ. In a ſubſequent period, they aſſumed a ſterner form. The plan of reviving them, was lately adopted by the miniſter. It was propoſed to captivate the underſtandings of the people into a farther continuance of the american war, by raiſing their reſentment againſt the houſe of Bourbon; holding forth, at the ſame time to the honeſt prejudices of my countrymen, the augmentation of the navy of England, as the object of this unconſtitutional ſupply.

When regiments have obtained county names, it will not be very difficult to employ them in quelling riots, and in apprehending murderers. After a decent period, it will appear very reaſonable, and not unconſtitutional, to make uſe of their aſſiſtance in guarding the bank, in patrolling the ſtreets and environs of the metropolis, in preventing riots when the people are aſſembled to conſider grievances, or quietly debate upon the proper means of obtaining a more equal repreſentation of the commons; until, at length, they become the ordinary aſſiſtance of the ſheriffs, and a very

proper ſubſtitute for the ancient "poſſe comitatus." Theſe, my countrymen, are the innovations, which ought really to alarm your apprehenſions, and animate you to reſtore freedom and independence to the democratic branch of the legiſlature; by equalizing the repreſentation; by ſhortening the duration of parliament; by extending the right of ſuffrage. Though they may appear as novelties to you, becauſe the injuries they are intended to repair, were inflicted before you came into exiſtence; yet, they are not innovations in our conſtitution, they flouriſhed at the period, when the conſtitution flouriſhed in its moſt perfect ſtate of health and vigour.

The raiſing of money for building of ſhips, was intended, ſay the ſupporters of that odious meaſure, to convince the houſe of Bourbon of the ſpirit and reſources of this country. I ſhould rather ſuſpect it was propoſed as a precedent, to aſſiſt in bringing the conſtitution of this country to a greater degree of reſemblance with that of France, where theſe voluntary contributions are in high eſtimation with miniſters and

and kings. In that country, as I am credibly informed, the regiments alſo have provincial appellations. The free gifts of the commons in parliament, are the only mode of contribution which this conſtitution acknowledges. Be aſſured, that every other mode is reſorted to, for ſome deſtructive purpoſe. Neither the ſtanding army, nor the militia, as now modified, are the true and proper defence of the engliſh people. The conſtitutional ſtrength of England conſiſts in the voluntary exertions of the virtue of its free-born ſons, armed with their elective franchiſes, to guard againſt internal enemies; and adorned with the habiliments of war, for the purpoſe of reſiſtance againſt external foes.

MENTOR.

XII.

SEPTEMBER 20, 1782.

I HAVE often been ſurpriſed to hear the abſurd charge of innovation urged againſt the propoſed parliamentary reform, by per-

ſons, from whoſe abilities and habits of reflection more conſtitutional ſentiments might juſtly be expected. To ſuch, ſomething more than reaſon and argument are wanted for the purpoſe of conviction. I, therefore, will addreſs myſelf to thoſe, who are in danger of being ſeduced into an acquieſcence in doctrines of the moſt pernicious conſequence to the cauſe of freedom.

"Innovation" is derived from a latin term ſignifying "new," and we are to underſtand by this expreſſion an opinion or a practice of recent introduction, and oppoſed to the ſentiment, and experience of former ages. The word "new," like many others, ſuch as long, young, little, is a term of relative import. An houſe is new, if it has been built only four or five years, as the term of five years bears a ſmall proportion to the duration of the generality of houſes in this country. A church is new, if even ſixty years have elapſed ſince its foundation, as ſixty bears an equally ſmall proportion to the time that other churches have exiſted. In the ſame manner, we muſt uſe the term

"new"

" new" when applied to the conſtitution of England; which flouriſhed in its full vigour in the time of the immortal Alfred, and may, therefore, be ſaid to have endured above a thouſand years. Annual parliaments were the common uſage of the country for above nine hundred years. Triennial parliaments were introduced in the reign of William the third; and, therefore, if they had exiſted ever ſince that period, would have been eſteemed an " innovation," as ninety years bears a ſmall proportion to a thouſand, the age of the conſtitution. The ſeptennial bill was paſſed in the year 1716, and, therefore, is ſtill more evidently an " innovation." We are diſpoſed to call things old, which happened in our early age; but this, my countrymen muſt ſee, is an impropriety in the preſent inſtance; the conſtitution was really old when we were infants. The ſeptennial bill was then eſteemed, with propriety, an innovation; and the evils that have ſucceeded its introduction, ſhew that it ought to be repealed, as a novelty of the moſt dangerous tendency, though ſubmitted to, at the time, for reaſons

of ſtate. In the ſame manner, as appears from a late excellent publication, two hundred and forty-ſix members of the commons' houſe of parliament are returned by new boroughs, that is, by corporations created after the conſtitution had exiſted, in great purity, above ſeven hundred years. Even the act of Henry the ſixth, which deprived ſo many hundred thouſand citizens of their right of ſuffrage, is an innovation. But, were it otherwiſe, that deteſtable act would be equally unconſtitutional; as, according to lord Camden's doctrine of general warrants, were the limitations of that act in uſe, ſince the time of Julius Cæſar, they would not be legal, as being contrary to natural right.

MENTOR.

XIII.

1782.

I AM very credibly informed, that it was in contemplation to propoſe on ſaturday at Guildhall, the Suffolk meaſure of raiſing money

money for building a ſhip of war, by what is very improperly termed, voluntary ſubſcriptions.

I rejoice that the project of the miniſter has been, a ſecond time, defeated in the metropolis. It is neceſſary, however, that the friends of freedom and the conſtitution, ſhould continue upon their guard. They may reſt aſſured, that the unquiet ſpirit of deſpotiſm will never ceaſe from its exertions, but will again bring forward the ſame unconſtitutional and deteſtable meaſure, the moment an opportunity ſhall offer of effecting its deſtructive purpoſe.

Much praiſe is due, to the ſalutary warnings, which have been repeatedly given upon this ſubject. When ſchemes of the moſt dangerous tendency are in agitation, it is the duty of the public prints to warn the people, and prevent their being deluded into an acquieſcence in ſuch meaſures, as would probably end in their deſtruction.

The plan of levying money by ſubſcription, for building ſhips of war, is too evidently the offſpring of the ſame malignant

counſellors, who have more recently adviſed the king to attempt the attachment of the old regiments to the counties, for the purpoſe of interweaving a ſtanding army of mercenaries, in times of peace, with the free conſtitution of England; an idea, ſo full of danger to every thing that britons ſhould hold dear, that I am aſtoniſhed at the tameneſs, with which ſo very alarming a project has been received by the public.

It is the characteriſtic of an adminiſtration truly wiſe, to attempt the eſtabliſhment of an honeſt purpoſe, by honourable and upright means. A departure from virtue, both in the end propoſed, and in the ſubordinate ſteps, is doubly reprehenſible. It was poſſible for lord Shelburne to have effected his purpoſe, by means not liable to exception, in a conſtitutional point of view. He has choſen, however, that his adminiſtration, when compared with that of the worſt of his predeceſſors, ſhould claim the horrible precedence; he has determined, that this iſland, once the ſeat and patroneſs of freedom, ſhould not only continue to riot in fraternal blood, but that in every ſtroke, which

which it aims at its brother's vitals, it ſhould wound its own. I am, from my heart, perſuaded, that the primary end and object of the ſhip-building project, was to rouſe the engliſh, by their ancient prejudices, to reſolve on the continuance of the american war. France and Spain, according to an expreſſion not of the moſt charitable kind, are termed the natural enemies of England. Againſt theſe, we are exhorted and animated to ſtrain every nerve, unconſcious, that he, who fans the flame, has no other end in view, than the diſturbance of thoſe glorious inſtitutions in America; where, notwithſtanding the efforts of miniſters and ———'s, I truſt, the human ſpecies will, at laſt, obtain an aſylum; and every individual be permitted to enjoy a larger portion of civil and religious liberty, than hath been indulged in any age or clime.

LÆLIUS.

XIV.

A LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION.*

BUXTON, JULY 20, 1784.

SIR,

IT is the profeſſed deſign of the ſociety for conſtitutional information, to diffuſe, among the commonalty of this iſland, the knowledge of thoſe political rights and privileges, which are immediately connected with the enjoyment of civil liberty. This purpoſe of your inſtitution, you have already very generally, and ſucceſsfully, promoted, by your publications reſpecting the violated rights of ſuffrage, and the unwarrantable prolongations of parliaments beyond that period, which the conſtitution and the reaſon of things aſſign as the proper limits of their duration. Nor have you been

[* See Tracts publiſhed by the Society for conſtitutional information, vol. ii. 59.-62.]

been inattentive to the obligation, incumbent upon the members of every well regulated ſtate, to be ſkilled in the uſe of arms, a knowledge eſſentially neceſſary to the ſafeguard of the community, againſt its foreign and domeſtic foes.

Such preparation has been ably evinced, by the learned and excellent author of "An inquiry into the legal mode of ſuppreſſing riots," and of "A dialogue upon the principles of government," to be truly conſtitutional, and not only to be warranted, but, in the beſt times of our republic, injoined by law; the legiſlature of this country conſidering the arms of freemen, as the ſtrongeſt ſecurity, under heaven, againſt every ſpecies of civil injury or commotion. Were the ancient ſpirit of our anceſtors in this inſtance revived, were the right to univerſal ſuffrage reſtored, were the ſeptennial and triennial bills repealed, public virtue, I am confident, would re-aſſume its ſeat in the glowing heart of every engliſh citizen: "patriæ decus et tutamen" ſhould appear reſplendent on his martial brow.

It has been, too much, the cuſtom to re-

preſent

preſent the inhabitants of a neighbouring kingdom as friendly to deſpotiſm, as inſenſible to the feelings of genuine patriotiſm. The following quotation and authorities, extracted from a pamphlet printed at the commencement of the preſent century, ſpeak the ſenſe of free parliaments and a gallant people, upon the ſubject of this letter; and ought to animate the preſent generation to revive the wiſe and ſalutary inſtitution of our ſires. I am, ſir,

your obedient ſervant,

JOHN JEBB.

EXTRACT FROM "AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE ANCIENT RIGHTS OF THE PARLIAMENT OF SCOTLAND.*

"IN the reign of queen Mary, it was one of the articles agreed on betwixt the deputies of the court, and thoſe of the nobility, that the king and queen neither made peace nor war on their parts, but by the counſel, judgment, and conſent of the eſtates, according to the ordinance of the country, and

* Printed in 1703.

and as was obſerved by their predeceſſors; which was a fair acknowledgment of the power the eſtates had anciently in that matter.

" The eſtates having ſo great a power in affairs of war and peace, it followed naturally that they ſhould have a right to take order about arming the people, and training them up in the uſe of their arms. So much of the ſovereignty being then lodged in the three eſtates, they apprehended no danger of rebellion from the people, whom it was their advantage to cheriſh or encourage. The barons and freeholders could not otherwiſe maintain their own grandeur and riches, but by having ſubſtantial and wealthy tenants; and the boroughs could not expect that their corporations ſhould flouriſh, either in commerce or good diſcipline, if the burghers and other inhabitants were not encouraged by a mild and juſt government. This being the caſe, and the intereſt of the government and people one and the ſame, the parliament, from time to time, injoined all of them that were capable of bearing arms, to be armed

and

and diſciplined; ſettled the days for their rendezvouſes; ordered butts to be erected in every pariſh, that the youth might on holidays be encouraged to improve themſelves in archery; and enacted, that the ſheriffs and barons, and magiſtrates of boroughs, ſhould take care to ſee this performed, and levy penalties upon thoſe that neglected or tranſgreſſed thoſe ſtatutes. Thus, in the act of William I. cap. 23, it is enacted, that every man ſhall be armed for the defence of the kingdom according to his ability; and the arms are there ſpecified, and maſters appointed by the ſheriffs and barons every eaſter.

* * * * * * * *

"In the act of James III. cap. 106, it is ordered, that the ſheriffs hold rendezvouſes of the ſubjects according to the act, and give the king an account under his own ſeal, and that of four barons of the ſhire, of all the men able to bear arms in the ſaid ſhire, and of their being armed according to the act.

* * * * * * *

"In the act of James I. cap. 61, it is enacted, that in order to diſcipline the people through

through all the kingdom, every ſheriff, ſtewart, bailie, provoſt, alderman, and bailies of boroughs, lords, and bailies of regalities, at very weapon-ſhewing, concur with the king's commiſſioners, that ſhall happen to be deputed to them, and they together to conſult with the moſt able perſons of the ſhire; and after they have enrolled the names of every man, with their harneſs and weapons, chuſe one able man or more, for every pariſh, who ſhall be captain to the companies of the ſaid pariſhes, to teach them the uſe of their arms; and ſhall aſſemble their companies at leaſt twice per month, during May, June, and July, and the like in all other months, if they find it convenient; and the captains to be choſen as oft as ſhall be ſeen expedient by the ſheriff of the ſhire, and the commiſſioners and council fixed with him.

" Thus we find, that our people were univerſally and continually trained up in the uſe of arms; that every man was obliged to be armed according to his quality, and that the command of their armed men was not intruſted with every man that could get a com-

a commiſſion from the king; but either with ſuch as were choſen by the people themſelves, as in the above mentioned act, or with the lords and barons, that were their landlords and maſters, and, by conſequence, obliged in honour and intereſt to treat them civilly; and being ſo much concerned in the welfare of the kingdom themſelves, were not ſo liable to be bribed, or bought over, to eſpouſe the intereſt of the court againſt that of the country, as mercenary troops and ſtanding armies have ever been."

XV.

TO MR. JUSTICE BULLER.

SEPTEMBER 8, 1784.

THE current doctrine of the bench, that the truth of a libel is an aggravation of the guilt incurred by its publication, reſts upon the idea, that this compoſition derives its criminality from its tendency to produce a breach of the peace; an idea, originating in feudal principles, and altogether foreign to the juſt object

object and end of punishment in this instance.

The censorial power of the people, by which I mean that freedom of the press, which is the bulwark of english liberties, cannot be duly exercised, unless every individual be allowed freely to canvass the public actions of public men.

If, in the discussion of your late conduct at Shrewsbury, I misrepresent the fact, I shall certainly be so far guilty of injustice, and liable to the proper censure. If I justly state the fact, and err in my inferences, my judgment may be called in question, but my person ought to be secure from prosecution. If rightly stating the fact, and subjoining such reflections on your conduct, as common-sense will justify, I point out to my fellow-citizens the pernicious tendency of the principles you have avowed and acted upon, I shall deserve their approbation; and have no doubt, but that whatever prosecution might openly or secretly be encouraged by the friends of despotism, an impartial and duly informed jury of my countrymen

would find the general verdict, " not guilty of the charge."

But, however this may be, no conſideration whatever ſhall induce me to ſtifle the juſt reſentment, which, as an engliſhman, I feel on account of the doctrine you have adopted in your ſpeech, and your ſubſequent demeanour to the Shropſhire jury.

Two editions of the trial of the dean of St. Aſaph, have been publiſhed by Mr. Gurney. In my preſent obſervations, I ſhall not be guided ſolely by his authority, however reſpectable ; obſerving only, that I have not the remoteſt intention of impeaching his veracity and honour.

The points to which I propoſe, at preſent, to ſolicit the attention of the public, are contained in the following propoſitions :

I muſt however premiſe, that it has been hinted, that the indictment was not read upon the day of trial. The fact may eaſily be aſcertained upon further inquiry. I will fairly own, the omiſſion appears to me of ſo extraordinary a nature, that, in this inſtance, I doubt the accuracy of my informant; and there-

therefore, I ſhall only obſerve upon this point, that if ſuch overſight be a fact, it may account, in part, for the conduct of the jury in yielding to the ſuggeſted alteration; as I think no juryman, upon hearing the inflamed invective with which the indictment commences, could have been brought to aſſent to the recorded verdict.

The propoſitions which follow, reſt upon far ſuperior teſtimony.

1. That after the jury had returned into court, and, by their foreman, had regularly delivered their verdict, "guilty of publiſhing only," you refuſed to record the verdict, though ſolemnly and repeatedly called upon ſo to do, by the counſel for the defendant.

2. That, upon an appeal to the jury, they ſteadily declared it to be their intention, that the word "only" ſhould ſtand part of the verdict.

3. That you ſuggeſted to the jury a meaning evidently foreign to their idea, in the following words. "If I underſtand you right, by your verdict you mean to ſay "guilty of publiſhing this libel;" but was inſtantly

corrected by a juryman, who replied, "No! the pamphlet."

4. That after your ſevere, but unmerited, harſh behaviour to Mr. Erſkine, (whoſe zeal, ability and integrity are beyond my praiſe,) the jury deſired leave to go out.

5. That after a verdict had been ſuggeſted to the jury in court, ſubſtantially differing from that delivered by their foreman, you ordered the verdict ſo amended to be recorded, upon a declaration from ſome of the jury that ſuch was their meaning, although a juryman at the moment exclaimed, "that is not the verdict."

6. It appears moſt evident, that the jury, from the beginning, were thoroughly ſatisfied of the purport of the innuendos; that they uniformly declared their perſuaſion, and no man of common-ſenſe could do otherwiſe, that G. meant gentleman; F. farmer; "king," king of Great-Britain; and "parliament," the parliament of Great-Britain; and yet they perſiſted in their idea, that the word "only" ſhould ſtand part of their verdict.

Surely, as they neither found that the pamphlet

pamphlet was a libel, nor any criminal intention in the publiſher, it was fair for you to conclude, that it was their intention to acquit the defendant. Common ſenſe ſeeming to dictate, that if the pamphlet be not declared criminal by thoſe, to whom, as proper judges, the pamphlet was recited, criminality of intention alſo being excluded by the word "only," there remained no foundation for guilt.

I will ſtate this matter more fully, and with ſome variety of expreſſion.

The fact ſtated in the indictment is, in plain engliſh, "the dean of St. Aſaph has maliciouſly publiſhed a ſeditious pamphlet." To this accuſation the dean pleaded the general plea, "not guilty;" the trial of this fact was ſubmitted to the jury, and it may be reſolved into the three following particulars:

1. The publiſhing of a certain pamphlet in which G. means gentleman; F. farmer, &c.

2. That this pamphlet is a falſe and ſeditious libel on the king and parliament of Great-Britain.

3. That the dean of St. Aſaph publiſhed this pamphlet, with the malicious intention ſtated in the indictment.

The jury find that the dean of St. Aſaph publiſhed the pamphlet, and they do not pray the diſcretion of the court, which is the form injoined by the 13th of E. 1. c. 30, whereby, the jury, doubting of the complexion of the fact, are permitted, in a particular inſtance, to find a ſpecial verdict, more properly ſtiled a "verdict, at large."

They alſo add the word "only," thereby pointedly excluding every idea of guilt.

It may, therefore, however aukwardly they may have expreſſed their meaning, be preſumed to have been their intention to find the defendant not guilty of the charge.

At leaſt ſuch, very honeſtly, might have been your deduction, upon hearing the verdict as delivered by the foreman.

Or, which would have been perfectly regular, obſerving the confuſion of the jury, you might have acquieſced in their deſire to go out of court, for the purpoſe of reconſidering their verdict.

This might poſſibly have produced an effect

fect ſimilar to that deſcribed in the following extract from ſir John Hawle's dialogue between a barriſter and a juryman; a tract, which I am ſorry was not read by the jury, previouſly to their entering upon their important charge. It relates to the trial of William Penn, in 1670, for preaching to an unlawful aſſembly of the people in Grace-church-ſtreet.

"The trial began on the ſaturday; the jury retiring, after ſome conſiderable time ſpent in debate, came in, and gave this verdict, "guilty of preaching in Gracechurch-ſtreet." At which the court was offended, and told them "they had as good ſay nothing;" adding, "was it not an unlawful aſſembly? you mean he was ſpeaking to a tumult of people there." But the foreman ſaying, what he had delivered was all he had in commiſſion; and others of them affirming, that they allowed of no ſuch words as "an unlawful aſſembly" in their verdict, they were ſent back again, and then brought in a verdict in writing, ſubſcribed with all their hands, in theſe words; "we the jurors

hereafter named, do find William Penn to be guilty of ſpeaking or preaching to an aſſembly met together in Gracechurch-ſtreet, the fourteenth of Auguſt 1670; and William Mead not guilty of the ſaid indictment."

This the court reſented ſtill worſe, and therefore ſent them back again, and adjourned, till ſunday morning; but then too they inſiſted on the ſame verdict; ſo the court adjourned 'till monday morning; and then the jury brought in the priſoners generally "not guilty," which was recorded and allowed of."

The ſubſequent events are foreign to my purpoſe, though worthy of the notice of every future jury; and not altogether undeſerving of the attention of every future judge.

TREBATIUS.

XVI. TO

XVI.

TO THE REV. CHRISTOPHER WYVILL.

Parliament-ſtreet, May 6, 1785.

DEAR SIR,

If any motive could induce me to break through the reſolution I had formed to decline appearing at a meeting,* the purport of which, you gave me to underſtand, was to conſider upon the proper means of enforcing an union upon the principles of the miniſter, your kind note of laſt night would have had that effect. But I will freely own, that ſome late occurrences have much alarmed me; they lead me to believe, that, although the viſible agents are actuated by the pureſt principles, and are totally unconſcious, as well as incapable, of any ſiniſter aim, ſomething foreign to the main queſtion, if not inimical to the real intereſts of the people, is

* Held at the Thatch'd-houſe, St. James's-ſtreet, on ſaturday the ſeventh of May, 1785.

is intended, which may be revealed in its day.

In cenſuring the conduct of the majority of the preſent parliament, and in animating the people to perſevere in the demand of their undoubted right to ſhort parliaments and a fairer repreſentation, I would cordially concur; and the ſtronger the language, the more in harmony with my feelings. But, an union upon Mr. Pitt's principles, although I would, on no account, be underſtood to reprobate the whole of his plan, I cannot bring myſelf to approve. The extenſion of the right of ſuffrage to copy-holders, is certainly juſt; and although I have objections to an increaſe of county repreſentatives, yet I muſt acknowledge that the transfer of the elective franchiſe from decayed boroughs to the metropolis, and to large towns, at preſent unrepreſented, would, when effected, be a conſiderable advance to conſtitutional perfection. Yet, defects are evidently apparent upon the face of this ſyſtem. No proviſion as yet appears for the relief of ſuch boroughs as Bury, Yarmouth, Cambridge, Buckingham, &c. where reaſon, even on Mr. Pitt's principles,

ciples, requires that the right of ſuffrage ſhould in them be extended far beyond its preſent limitations. It is alſo an inſuperable objection, in my mind, to ſuch union as you propoſe, that a very long period of time muſt neceſſarily elapſe, before any effect of conſequence can be produced, by the operation of the principles propoſed. The country, in the mean time, may be ruined ; the people totally enſlaved.

I ſee alſo ſtrong objections to the idea of depending, for an improvement of parliamentary repreſentation, upon the voluntary ſurrender of the preſent monopolizers ; more eſpecially, as the parliament we wiſh to reform, is itſelf to direct the circumſtances of the purchaſe.

With reſpect to the recovery of the long violated right of ſuffrage of the great collective body, Mr. Pitt, in his ſpeech, repreſents it as a conſideration of importance, that all ſuch views and proſpects will be totally foreclоſed by the adoption of this plan, which he propoſes ſhall be final. Indeed, it gave me great concern to obſerve, that, in a ſpeech, certainly manifeſting real ability,

ability, and diſcloſing much conſtitutional information, was alſo comprehended other matter, totally unfounded, and of the moſt dangerous tendency, with regard to the cauſe of freedom.

As I am perſuaded that a reform, when effected, muſt take place in conſequence of the active energy of the people of this country, I ſhould think myſelf guilty of countenancing the miſchief I apprehend, were I to go the lengths you ſeem to wiſh, in ſupport of the miniſter's idea. I would not, on any account, be acceſſary to the obſtruction of any real good he may propoſe to effect. My late conduct at the Weſtminſter committee, I truſt, evinces, that real good I will aſſiſt in promoting, from whatever quarter it may proceed. At the ſame time, I am reſolved to oppoſe, whatever I eſteem dangerous to the cauſe of freedom.

I muſt alſo own, that the conduct of the houſe, upon Mr. Sawbridge's late motion for ſhortening the duration of parliaments, appears to me an additional argument for alarm.

To that gentleman, to lord Surrey, and to Mr.

Mr. Martin, the country is indeed greatly indebted for their manly conduct on that day. But, did the ſilent vote of the miniſter on this occaſion, diſcover the proper warmth of attachment to the acknowledged principles of the conſtitution? The queſtion, you may anſwer, applies equally to oppoſition. Totally unconnected with party, I feel no difficulty in acknowledging, that it applies to them, if poſſible, with greater force. Heaven grant the conſtitution may meet with friends of a very different ſpirit, in this its hour of danger, or, engliſh liberties will ſoon become an empty name!

In Ireland, as in a faithful mirror, the real maxims of the preſent adminiſtration, reſpecting political liberty, appear ſtrongly depicted, and in their native deformity; attachments; reſtraints of the preſs; denial of the right of the ſubject to bear arms; and the rejection of the reform bill! in all theſe meaſures, the king's attorney-general acts a conſpicuous part.

I earneſtly wiſh an union of the people. I will do all in my power to promote one, upon a juſt and comprehenſive principle.

I will

I will alſo cordially ſupport any reaſonable, any practicable plan, although it does not immediately proceed to the full extent of my own idea; provided, the eſſential rights of the people are not reprobated in ſuch plan, and all further improvement forecloſed. But I will never purſue a line of conduct, which implies an approbation of principles I abhor; a line of conduct, which would tend to diſſociate the minds of very many approved friends of the conſtitution, from our cauſe; and veſt an implicit confidence in a man, who, though juſtly reſpectable in many points, has openly avowed himſelf, and as openly acted, as the miniſter of the crown.

For theſe reaſons, and as my preſence at a meeting, where my voice, in all probability, would be diſcordant from the general tone, cannot poſſibly anſwer any good purpoſe, with ſincereſt and moſt heart felt reſpect for yourſelf, and ſuch of the worthy gentlemen as I hear are to be of your company, I beg leave to decline complying with your obliging invitation. Our cauſe, I have no doubt, will ultimately prevail. To the lateſt moment of my life, I will exert myſelf with

unabated

unabated vigour in its ſupport, whatever may be the event with reſpect to my fortune or my fame : happy if my conduct be ſuch, as ſhall approve itſelf to the friends of freedom and of public virtue ; yet, not deſtitute of ſufficient conſolation, if deprived of every external ſpecies of ſupport, I be conſcious only of the approbation of my own mind in the ſolitary hour.

I am, &c.

JOHN JEBB.

XVII.

JULY 12, 1785.

As I am perſuaded that arbitrary power will then, and then only, be effectually and finally eſtabliſhed, when this metropolis, hitherto the bulwark of the people of England againſt the open attacks, and ſecret machinations of deſpotiſm, ſhall be ſubdued to the ſimilitude of Paris, by the appointment of " commiſſioners of police," it is with ſingular pleaſure, I aſſure you of the following fact.

" The

" The ſociety for conſtitutional information, have appointed a committee, conſiſting of ſome of its moſt active members, to watch and report the progreſs of the expected police bill, with a view of conveying the neceſſary information to their fellow-citizens, in caſe, under ſpecious pretences, articles or clauſes hoſtile to the liberties of engliſhmen, ſhould be admitted into the compoſition of that bill."

TREBATIUS.

XVIII.

AUGUST 2, 1785.

THE bill which changed triennial parliaments into ſeptennial, together with that which had before eſtabliſhed triennial inſtead of annual, or rather ſeſſional parliaments, in defiance of the fundamental principles of the conſtitution, have been attended with numerous and ſubſtantial evils to this country. In many of the meetings of the people, ſeptennial parliaments have been declared a violation of the conſtitution, and

an

an intolerable grievance. To them we owe the american war, and almoſt every calamity of which we complain; as, in conſequence of their eſtabliſhment, the repreſentative is enabled to form an intereſt ſeparate from, or oppoſite to that of his conſtituent.

Nor is it among the leaſt of the evils derived from this ſource, that the collective body is thereby deprived of thoſe frequent opportunities of aſſembling, and expreſſing its ſentiments on public men, and public meaſures, which it formerly enjoyed; an evil, more to be deplored, as ſeaſons multiply which require its interference. The only real check upon government that now remains, is that of popular cenſure, which, as the people ſeldom meet on a public account, is treated with deriſion by miniſters of ſtate. We have, by fatal neglect, omitted many opportunities of aſſerting that right of bearing arms, which is one of the inherent privileges of a freeborn engliſhman; and which, from a principle of general affection to the cauſe of liberty, I am induced to wiſh the iriſh may never reſign.

With reſpect to public conventions, Ta-

citus repreſents the inattention of the moſt warlike nations to that ſoundeſt principle of policy, as one of the great cauſes of the ſucceſs of the romans in ſubduing the world. I will quote the emphatic expreſſions of that able writer, without the alteration of a ſingle word, and leave my countrymen, after conſidering the ſigns of the times, to make the application. " Nec aliud adverſus validiſſimas gentes pro nobis utilius, quam quod in commune non conſulunt; rarus ad propulſandum commune periculum conventus: ita, dum ſinguli pugnant, univerſi vincuntur."

Nothing, ſurely, but the ſame inattention to the principles of juſt policy, can account for the general apathy of this nation, while meaſures of a nature ſo hoſtile to civil and political liberty, are purſued by government in a ſiſter kingdom. Were the people to meet more frequently, they would certainly be called upon to attend to this momentous truth, viz. that in the deſtruction of iriſh rights, the deſtruction of the rights of the people of England is alſo included. If the legiſlature of Ireland in one point, of confeſſedly great importance, is rendered dependent

pendent upon the adminiſtration of England, is it poſſible that engliſhmen ſhould not perceive, that the influence of the crown would alſo in this country be enormouſly increaſed? I remember this argument was very forcibly urged by the patriots, when, by the practices of lord M———, an arbitrary government, (which ſtill prevails) was eſtabliſhed in the extenſive province of Quebec. I know it will be ſaid, that I falſely ſtate the queſtion, for the intention of the fourth propoſition of the regulations, which, O ſhame to patriotiſm! paſſed without debate in the houſe of lords, is to aſſert the ſuperintending power of the britiſh legiſlature in the ſpecific inſtance therein mentioned. But, what is parliamentary repreſentation in this country? Is it not a mockery, and an empty name? An obſervation which, on a ſimilar occaſion, was urged with ſingular propriety by the duke of Richmond. At the preſent I ſhall only obſerve, that ſhould this reſolution paſs in Ireland, the firſt deadly blow will then be ſtruck at engliſh independence; a ſecond will only then be wanting to warrant me to exclaim, "actum eſt de libertate anglicana."

The victory of the minions of the crown, would be further puſhed, until by an union of the kingdoms, (the obvious aim and almoſt avowed purpoſe of the preſent movements of government,) all power of conſtitutional reſiſtance would be for ever loſt to both countries.

The ſame dark policy which dictated the late meaſures reſpecting Ireland, has long been employed in prejudicing the minds of engliſhmen againſt a commercial union between us and our tranſatlantic brethren; an union, which, in various manners, would contribute to our proſperity and glory; but of this, for the preſent, let an hint ſuffice.

I have lately, in a ſhort letter under my preſent ſignature, endeavoured to warn my fellow-citizens againſt an inſidious attempt to introduce a french ſyſtem of police into the metropolis; an attempt, which it becomes every friend of freedom to reſiſt. To the idle obſervations upon that letter, I ſhall make no reply. It is to facts, not words, I wiſh my countrymen to attend; melancholy indeed is the taſk to ring the bell of alarm, while a ſon of Chatham directs the helm; but

but truth, and a genuine love of freedom, conſtrain me to declare, that, unleſs the inhabitants of a neighbouring kingdom be timely wiſe, that conſtitution, in the renovation of which, they have ſo lately gloried, may, by the rude unhallowed hand of deſpotiſm, be ſuddenly deſtroyed; and that we, who vainly think we are free and independent, while, perhaps, we are aſſiſting in the ruin, or heedleſſly contemplating the proſpect, may look back like the men of Ai in ſcripture, and behold the ſolid ſtructure of our own in flames.

TREBATIUS.

XIX.

AUGUST 22, 1785.

WITH the moſt heartfelt ſatisfaction I congratulate the friends of engliſh independency, upon the noble exertions of the iriſh patriot band, upon the ever memorable night of the 12th inſtant. The majority, who ſupported the minions of power, when the individuals who compoſed it, ſtood ar-

ranged in oppoſition to the legionaries of liberty, manifeſted that marked inferiority, which the awful preſence of virtue impoſes upon the otherwiſe ſhameleſs front of proſtitution; at the ſame time that the abilities, integrity, and ſubſtantial property of the defenders of the conſtitution, afforded to the glowing hearts of the ſpectators, a well-grounded confidence of future triumph. I have, in a former letter, expreſſed my hope, that Ireland, in reſiſting the inſidious attack upon the independence of her legiſlature, would eventually ſecure the liberties of England. But then, my countrymen muſt not be wanting to themſelves; ruin is pouring in upon us by a thouſand channels; deſpotiſm approaches with alarming ſtrides; we liſten to the ſeducing tales of the partizans of power, who hourly endeavour to diſſociate us from thoſe who have a common intereſt with us, in the cauſe of freedom; and pour reproach on a people, who from the circumſtances of kindred-blood, a ſimilarity of purſuits, and ancient habits of intercourſe, would, I am perſuaded, if kindly and honourably dealt

dealt with, prove our faſteſt friends. Is it by theſe effuſions of inſult, with which every publication abounds, that engliſhmen can hope to ſecure the commerce, or enſure the affection of their iriſh or their american brethren, in the hour of danger? A moment's reflection will decide what ought to be our policy: but through want of adopting the principle of Tacitus, mentioned in my laſt letter; through a neglect of conferring upon each important ſubject, in ſtated meetings of the people, deluſion every where prevails. The friends of arbitrary power know full well, that a cordial ſpirit of good-will, nouriſhed by reciprocal acts of kindneſs, would produce that happy intercourſe between America and theſe iſlands, from which unnumbered bleſſings would be derived to the people of each country: but then they alſo fear that the lamp of liberty might poſſibly be relumed in this iſland; and that engliſhmen, urged by the fair example, might again begin to manifeſt that ſtern abhorrence of deſpotic power, which formerly did ſo much honour to our name. They alſo fear that meetings, and

committees of the people, might then be formed to watch and counteract, by their conſtitutional exertions, the inceſſant agency of that malignant ſpirit, which, for more than twenty years, has continued to ſcatter diſcord through the land, has inflicted diſgrace upon our name, and threatens ruin to us and our poſterity for ever. They alſo fear leſt Scotland, the ſcourge of tyrannic power in many a former generation, and unjuſtly traduced as regardleſs of liberty in the preſent, might rouſe at the animating call of the neighbouring iſland, and exhibit evidences of a gallant ſpirit, ſimilar to thoſe, which the hiſtoric page records in terms of honour, which can never be forgotten either by the friends or foes to freedom. Hence it is, and has been long the effort of the common enemy to infuſe, by every dark contrivance, unworthy ſuſpicions of our natural allies into the unſuſpecting breaſts of engliſhmen. Being thoroughly perſuaded, that were the film of prejudice removed, ſo that truth could attain an admiſſion to the uncorrupted mind, we ſhould be diſpoſed, with unanimous voice,

voice, to hail the triumph of liberty in every clime, and claſp the defenders of that choiceſt gift of heaven to man, to our kindred breaſts, with more than a fraternal love.

My voice, I feel, is feeble; my pen, I know, is deſtitute of that energy which is required to call the expiring virtue of my countrymen to the knowledge, to the aſſertion of their rights. But why does Junius, why does Orellan ſlumber? All power is derived from the people. In the people, by our conſtitution, is veſted the control of power. The power of legiſlation is a delegated truſt; the prerogative of the prince, and the privileges of the nobles, reſt ſolely on the ſame foundation. Are we then perſuaded, that the parliaments of theſe iſlands are real delegations of the people? Was the ſeptennial act, the act of the nation? Theſe are queſtions weighty and important. To reſolve them is far from being the province of either parliaments or kings. In what manner an houſe of commons has choſen to reſolve them, the hiſtory of the preſent ſeſſion will inform us.

To

To my fervent wiſhes for the final ſucceſs of the friends of liberty in Ireland, I will only add, at preſent, that it is my firm perſuaſion, that the late plan of parliamentary reform introduced by the miniſter of England, was as deficient with reſpect to any probable good effect in ſtemming the torrent of corruption, as it was unfounded in its principle; and that the ſolemn farce of introducing a motion, of which the ſole reſemblance to the real queſtion conſiſted in the name, and this at a moment, when every miniſterial exertion was employed to defeat a ſimilar meaſure in the ſiſter kingdom, is of itſelf ſufficient to ſtamp the character of its patron, and has raiſed more than a doubt of the purity of his intentions reſpecting the general cauſe of conſtitutional liberty, in the breaſts of very many of its moſt ſtrenuous and conſiſtent friends.

TREBATIUS.

XX.

A LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY FOR CONSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION.*

SIR,

THE purport of the following extract from the treatiſe of ſir John Forteſcue, chancellor in the reign of Henry the ſixth, on the difference between an abſolute and limited monarchy, is admirably expreſſed in the words of the author: conſequently, there is ſcarcely occaſion for any farther preamble, than the title of the chapter. I would, however, obſerve, that the paſſage appears worthy of public attention, not only on account of the good ſenſe and conſtitutional wiſdom, with which it is replete, but alſo as it breathes that ſpirit of freedom, which ſo frequently animated our anceſtors to aſſert the dignity and rights of men, in oppoſition to the tyrannical principles, and nefarious practices of miniſters and kings.

Although

[* See Tracts publiſhed by the Society for conſtitutional information, v. ii. p. 64—68.]

Although it is the main purpoſe of our author to demonſtrate the realm to be then moſt vigorous, when its commons abound in the comforts and conveniencies of life; his argument alſo tends to eſtabliſh a moſt important right, which, from ſome ſtrange fatality, engliſhmen ſeem diſpoſed to reſign, at a moment, when the aſſerting of it appears more particularly to be required by the circumſtances of the times: I mean the right of bearing arms for the public defence.

The preſent ſtate of the commonalty of England is indeed deplorable. We are expoſed without a friend or patron, like a helpleſs prey, to the depredations of miniſters of ſtate. Every conſtitutional ſecurity, in which we formerly prided ourſelves, is inſidiouſly withdrawn, or ſubſtantially impaired. We are deprived of our right to arms, by iniquitous game laws; of our votes for the election of our legiſlators, by no leſs injurious reſtraints, falſely termed legal; of the right of ſuffrage, at the ſame time that the long continuance of

ſeptennial

ſeptennial parliaments has almoſt obliterated the remembrance of our former powers of control. I am, Sir,

Your obedient ſervant,

JOHN JEBB.

Parliament-ſtreet,
Sept. 16, 1785.

AN EXTRACT FROM FORTESCUE ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ABSOLUTE AND LIMITED MONARCHY.

C H A P. XII.

Hereafter ys ſchewyd, what harme would come to Englond, if the comons thereof were pore.

" SOME men have ſaid, that it war good for the kyng, that the comons of Englond wer made poer, as be the comons of Fraunce. For than, thay would not rebell as now thay done often tymes; which the comons of Fraunce do not, nor may do; for thay have no wepon, nor armor, nor good to bye it withall.

withall. To thees maner of men, may be ſaid with the philoſopher, " Ad parva reſpicientes, de facili enunciant;" that is to ſay, thay that ſeen fewe thyngs, woll ſone ſay their advyſe. Forſothe thoos folkys conſyderyn litil the good of the realme of Englond, wherof the might moſt ſtondyth upon archers, which be no rich men. And if thay were made porer than they be, they ſchuld not have wherewith to bye them bowys, arrowes, jakkes, or any other armor of defence, whereby thay might be able to reſyſte our ennymyes, whan thay liſte to come upon us, which thay may do on every ſyde, conſydering that we be an ileland; and as it ys ſaid before, we may not have ſone ſocors off any other realme. Wherfor we ſchuld be a pray to al other ennymyes, but if we be mighty of our ſelf, which might ſtondith moſt upon our poer archers; and therfor thay nedyn not only to have ſuch abilyments as now is ſpoken of, but alſo thay nedyn to be mich exercyſyd in ſchotyng, which may not be done without right grete expenſys, as every man experte theryn

theryn knowyth right well. Wherfor the makyng poer of the comons, which is the makyng poer of our archers, ſchuld be the diſtruction of the gretteſt might of our realme. Item, if poer men, may not lightly ryſe, as is the opynyoun of thoes men, which for that cauſe would have the comons poer; hou than if a mighty man made a ryſyng, ſchuld he be repreſſyd; whan all the comons be ſo poer, that after ſuch opynyoun thay may not fyght, and by that reaſon not help the kyng with fyghtyng? And why makyth the kyng, the comons to be every yere muſtaryd; ſythen it was good thay had no harneſs, nor wer able to fyght? O hou unwiſe is the opynyoun of thees men; for it may not be mantenyd by any reaſon! Item, whan any ryſyng hath byn made in this land, before thees dayys by comons, the poreſt men thereof, hath byn the gretteſt cauſars and doars theryn. And thryfty men have ben loth therto, for drede of loſyng of their goods, but yet often tymes thay have gone with them thorough manaſys, or els the ſame poer men would have takyn their goods; wherin it ſemyth that povertye,

hath

hath byn the hole and cheffe cauſe of al ſuch ryſyng. The poer man hath ben ſtyryd therto, by occaſyon of his povertye, for to get good; and the riche men have gone with them, becauſe thay wold not be poer, by leſyng of their goods. What than would fal, if al the comons were poer? Truly it is like, that this land than, ſchuld be like unto the land of Beame, wher the comons for povertye roſe upon the nobles, and made al their goods to be comon. Item, it is the kyngs honor, and alſo his office, to make his realme riche; and yt ys diſhonor whan he hath a poer realme, of which men woll ſay, that he reygnyth upon beggars; yet it war mych gretter dyſhonor, if he fownd his realme riche, and than made it poer. And alſo it were gretely ayenſte his conſyence, that awght to defend them, and their goods, if he toke from them their goods, without lawfull cauſe; from the infamye whereof God defend our kyng, and gyve him grace to augment his realme in ryceſſe, welth, and proſperyte, to his perpetual lawde and honour. Item, the realme of Fraunce gevyth never frely of their own good

the preſent reſtrictions on the right of ſuffrage, and imperfect repreſentation in a ſeptennial parliament ſhall ſubſiſt, would only be calculated to deceive and amuſe the nation to its final deſtruction.

5. That inſtead of adding to the number of our ſtatutes by regulations incompetent to the purpoſe propoſed, reformation ſhould commence with the reſcinding and aboliſhing of the injurious acts and illegal cuſtoms above-mentioned: thus would the conſtitution, as if delivered from an oppreſſive weight that impedes its exertions, recover its energies; while the principles on which it is founded would ſuggeſt a ſimple, practicable, and effectual plan for regulating thoſe elections, on which our freedom, our happineſs, and our very national exiſtence muſt depend.

Governed by theſe conſiderations, the ſub-committee have framed the following plan, in which they have made it their chief effort plainly to expreſs every material proviſion for ſecuring the free election of an independent houſe of parliament; they have ſtudiouſly avoided entering into a detail;

they have ſuggeſted to the beſt of their ability a plan, founded upon conſtitutional principles, and the common right of mankind; a plan, expedient in our preſent circumſtances, and which may with facility be carried into execution by the ſpirited, yet pacific efforts of the people; provided their breaſts are informed with the ſame ſentiments of public virtue, and ardent love of liberty, which have hitherto animated the exertions of the engliſh nation.

PLAN for taking the ſuffrages of the people at the election of repreſentatives to ſerve in parliament.

I. THAT each county be divided into as many diſtricts as it is entitled to elect repreſentatives, each diſtrict chuſing one repreſentative.

II. That the diviſion of the county into diſtricts be conſtituted in ſuch a manner, that each diſtrict contain nearly an equal number of males competent to vote in elections; regard being had, as much as may be, to the parochial diviſions of the kingdom, ſo

that

XXI.

REPORT

OF THE

SUB-COMMITTEE OF WESTMINSTER.

Appointed April 12, 1780, to take into conſideration all ſuch matters, relative to the election of members of parliament, as may promote the purpoſes of the preſent aſſociation.

FREE-MASONS TAVERN, MAY 27, 1780.

THE ſub-committee having duly examined the various ſtatutes of this realm reſpecting the election of members to ſerve in the commons' houſe of parliament, more particularly ſuch as were enacted for the purpoſe of guarding againſt the prevalence of bribery and corruption at elections, and the operation of every other ſpecies of undue influence upon the electors and elected; and reflecting upon the inefficacy of theſe

proviſions with reſpect to the prevention of evils, which threaten the final extinction of our liberties, are decidedly of opinion, that no effectual reformation of the abuſes in queſtion can take place, unleſs the people exerciſe their inherent and undoubted right of reviewing the whole plan of delegation, and by recurring to the firſt principles of our conſtitution, again eſtabliſh it upon its ancient foundations of equity and right reaſon.

When error has obtained the ſanction of time, it appears to the unthinking mind under the ſemblance of truth: and even men of reflection, who have formed a juſt conception of its nature and its tendency, are in ſuch circumſtances alarmed with apprehenſions at the firſt attempts for its correction. However, as the conſequences of error, in proportion to its magnitude and extent of operation, are manifeſtly evil, and as conſtitutional errors may therefore be ſuppoſed to be unavoidably productive of national calamity, it is ſurely more prudent, in the proper ſeaſon, to ſubmit to the perhaps imaginary inconveniencies of a reformation,

mation, than to ſuſpend our exertions, until we are obliged to encounter thoſe accumulated miſeries, which an obſtinate perſeverance, in an acknowledged courſe of error, muſt derive upon both prince and people.

The prevalence of evil in the preſent hour proves the prevalence of error; and it does not require any extraordinary degree of ſagacity in the politician and philoſopher to diſcover, that the primary error, and the fruitful ſource of the many evils which we feel, conſiſts in a departure from fundamental principles, in the preſent conſtitution of the commons' houſe of parliament: in conſequence of which, it is no longer obedient to the will, or ſpeaks the language of the great conſtituent body of the people.

Every application, therefore, for the redreſs of the preſent grievances of the nation, that ſhall be made to a body of men, no longer under the influence of their conſtituents, but, on the contrary, uniformly acting in ſubſerviency to the views and intereſts of the crown, muſt of neceſſity be unſucceſsful; and, from the natural effect of diſappointment upon the human mind, will

probably impair the vigour of every future exertion.

Application to the crown to ſuſpend the exertion of its influence, or to repair the breaches made in that part of the conſtitution, which was intended to be the bulwark of the people againſt its encroachments, preſuppoſes ſuch an ignorance of the principles, which, in certain circumſtances, are found invariably to actuate the human heart, that one would be led to imagine the uſe of argument would be ſuperſeded by the obvious abſurdity of the expedient.

The event of the experiment, frequently repeated, has confirmed the concluſion which right reaſon would have ſuggeſted; and it now ſtands a truth, recorded for the benefit of every future generation, that when the point in queſtion is a redreſs of grievances, originating in oppreſſion, or a reſtitution of the rights and privileges of the people, millions ſue in vain.

To what earthly tribunal, therefore, ſhall an injured people have reſort in this alarming moment, when a deſperate faction, in the midſt of public calamity and diſtreſs, has

has manifeſted a determined purpoſe of perſevering in a line of conduct, which, if perſiſted in, muſt inevitably end in the ſubverſion of our liberties, and the deſolation of our ſtate? The ſun of England's glory perhaps ſoon may ſet to riſe no more!

One hope ſtill remains in the native energy of the great collective body of the people, the native energy of a race of men, who have always ſtood diſtinguiſhed in the annals of nations for every liberal ſentiment, and every generous principle that can dignify our kind.

The peaceful efforts of this mighty power, acting by committees freely choſen, are ſufficient, under the providence of heaven, to re-eſtabliſh the conſtitution in its ancient vigour. The public ſtate of affairs requires this exertion; the public voice at length appears diſpoſed to bear its teſtimony to this important truth; viz. "That the reſtoration of the commons' houſe of parliament to freedom and independency, by interpoſition of the great collective body of the nation, is eſſentially neceſſary to our exiſtence as a free people."

The circumſtances of the times, and the peculiar nature of the means, which muſt be employed for effecting our deliverance, require, that the propoſed plan be exhibited complete in all its eſſential forms; and that its various parts, being combined in ſtrict and neceſſary union with each other, be eſtabliſhed at one and the ſame moment of time.

When we caſt our eyes upon the conduct of the preſent commons' houſe of parliament; when we behold a majority of its members, in defiance of our petitions, and their own ſolemn declaration, perſiſt in increaſing the burdens of the people, and in a ſtedfaſt purpoſe of oppoſing every meaſure of redreſs, deſponding apprehenſions may, for a time, take place in the minds of the beſt and braveſt of our countrymen. Reflection, however, will diſcloſe a more pleaſing proſpect ariſing from the very extremity of our diſtreſs: more vigorous counſels, and an happy unanimity will be the unavoidable reſult; the alarm of the nobility for the very exiſtence of their preſent ſplendid diſtinctions will co-operate with the

the poignant feelings of the people; and every rank and deſcription of men will feel the propriety, the neceſſity of eſtabliſhing that plan of parliamentary reformation, which holds forth our beſt, and indeed our only ſecurity, againſt the all-devouring influence of the crown.

Political truth, like the moral feelings of the ſoul, is plain and ſimple; it recommends itſelf powerfully to the general ſentiment: and, when unveiled in its intrinſic purity, will aſſuredly call forth the animated exertions of millions in its ſupport.

An equal repreſentation of the people in the great council of the nation, annual elections, and the univerſal right of ſuffrage, appear ſo reaſonable to the natural feelings of mankind, that no ſophiſtry can elude the force of the arguments which are urged in their favour; and they are rights of ſo tranſcendent a nature, that, in oppoſition to the claim of the people to their enjoyment, the longeſt period of preſcription is pleaded in vain. They were ſubſtantially enjoyed in the times of the immortal Alfred; they were cheriſhed by the wiſeſt princes of the

the norman line; they form the grand palladium of our nation; they ought not to be eſteemed the grant of royal favour, nor were they at firſt extorted by violence from the hand of power: they are the birthright of engliſhmen, their beſt inheritance, which, without the complicated crimes of treaſon to their country, and injuſtice to their poſterity, they cannot alienate or reſign: they form that triple cord of ſtrength, which alone can be relied on to hold, in times of tempeſt, the veſſel of the ſtate.

With reſpect to the expediency of reforming the repreſentation of that country, and of recurring to the conſtitutional practice of annually electing the perſons ſent to parliament, the ſub-committee obſerve, that the general meeting of the deputies, on the 17th of March, decided, in the affirmative, upon the propriety of theſe meaſures, with unanimous voice; that the committee, from which this body received its inſtructions, have, with ſimilar unanimity, given their ſuffrages to the ſame ſentiment; and that the general meeting of the inhabitants of Weſtminſter upon the 6th of

April

April declared, " that the people of England have, and always had, a clear, unalienable, indefeaſible right to an annual election of their repreſentatives, as well as to an adequate and equal repreſentation, founded upon ſtronger grounds than that of any act or acts of parliament; and that the attainment of theſe important conſtitutional objects is the moſt effectual expedient for reſtoring and ſecuring the independency of parliament."

With regard to the reſtitution of the univerſal right of ſuffrage the ſub-committee conceive, that the reaſonableneſs and expediency of the meaſure will probably be more apparent, if the full extent and magnitude of thoſe powers be conſidered, which are entruſted to the repreſentative by the conſtituent body.

The doctrine that repreſentation and taxation are inſeparable, is founded in truth; but the undue preference that has been afforded to the rights of property, in various diſcuſſions of this ſubject, has tended to keep out of ſight other principles, equally eſſential to a juſt conception of this queſtion.

A por-

A portion of the ſoil, a portion of its produce, may be wanting to many; but every man has an intereſt in his life, his liberty, his kindred, and his country; and when laws affecting theſe are made by perſons, to whom he hath not delegated the power, each of theſe poſſeſſions, which are as ſubſtantial, as if, like land or money, they were objects of the ſenſes, may be invaded, and probably would be invaded by thoſe, who, being poſſeſſed of property, the grand enchantreſs of the world, would thereby be enabled more ſucceſsfully to gratify that luſt of deſpotic power, which ſo ſtrongly characterizes the human heart.

The exerciſe of the poor man's elective right is, therefore, eſſential to his freedom; and although in ordinary caſes, he may ſometimes diſpoſe of his ſuffrage without a proper regard to its importance, yet, when public calamity demonſtrates, that public confidence has been abuſed, the opportunity of rectifying the evil by a more judicious delegation will probably not be neglected. Common ſenſe will inſtruct him that his own free and unbiaſſed voice, united with the

the voices of that numerous claſs of fellow citizens, who are his fellow ſufferers at ſuch a period, will prevail over the intereſted oppoſition of the tyrants of their ſpecies, and finally eſtabliſh the real friends of humanity and of their country in the ſeat of power.

It may alſo be obſerved, that no conſideration would have a ſtronger tendency to generate proper ſentiments of affection to the community, and more effectually recall the minds of the riſing generation from a courſe of diſſipation and attachment to unworthy gratifications, than the perception of that ſhare of political conſequence, which the reſtitution of the univerſal right of ſuffrage would afford.

At a certain age all the male inhabitants of this kingdom, with a few exceptions, are ſubject to the obligation of ſerving in the militia. Shall a man, therefore, be thought unworthy of a ſuffrage in the election of his repreſentative, and, at the ſame time, ſhall his fellow citizens intruſt to his fidelity and courage whatever they hold dear? Is it reaſonable to deny to a citizen, when he has attained to maturity in his mental capacity, this common privilege of a freeman, the

right

right of being governed by laws, to which the aſſent of himſelf or his repreſentative has been obtained, and, at the ſame time, to avail ourſelves of his bodily ſtrength? Is it generous, is it politic, to treat him as an alien in the community, at the moment he may be ornamenting it by the powers of his underſtanding, or defending it by his arms?

Urged by the force of theſe reflections, your ſub-committee have conſidered the points propoſed to their deliberation in their full extent. They have examined the voluminous ſyſtem of laws relating to the ſubject of parliamentary elections, and find themſelves under a neſſity of pronouncing the far greater part of them to be founded upon partial conceptions, unjuſt reſtrictions, and falſe meaſures of expediency, which will not ſtand the teſt, when contraſted by the acknowledged principles of the conſtitution of this country.

More particularly, it appears to your ſub-committee,

1. That through the joint operation of the ſtatute of diſfranchiſement, paſſed in the eighth year of the reign of Henry VI. and

Circular letter from the petitioning clergy publiſhed M. i. 32 and 33. See the letter iii. 12—23; and defence of it in anſwer to a refutation, &c. 30—50.

Civil magiſtrate, how far limitted in matters of religion, ii. 119 and 131. iii. 175 and 176, and 201; anſwer to his plea of conſcience, ii. 116, and 117 note; can only reſtrain outward actions, iii. 2 and 3.

Claſſical merit too much diſregarded at Cambridge, ii. 270 and 271, and note; further obſervations thereon, ib. 355.

Clergy, the ſtate of too many, ii. 175; embarraſſed by their ſubſcription, iii. 216—221, and 233—241.

Coalition, between lord North and Mr. Fox, reprobated by Dr. J. in a ſpeech at the Shakeſpeare tavern, M. i. 181—184. See Fox.

Collier, Mr. one of the ſyndics at Cambridge, M. i. 60; ſupports the reform there, ib. 64.

Committees and delegations defended againſt objections to them, ii. 455—457; plan for their effectual inſtitution, ib. 472—490.

Confeſſional, the author of, proved his purpoſe, ii. 220; vindicated, iii. 31.

Controverſy, religious, ſome of the ill conſequences of, ſtated, i. 10—12; often conducted without charity, 209 and 210; inſtanced in the caſe of Mr. Lindſey, ib. 210, note.

Cooke, Dr. elected vice-chancellor of Cambridge, and his conduct relating to the queſtion of annual examinations, M. i. 47 and 48, and ii. 314—319; inſiſts on certain paſſages of Mr. J.'s Remarks being expunged M. i. 50; propoſes a grace for a committee (or ſyndicate) to conſider the queſtion

tion of examinations, ib. 51, and ii. 324—327 and ib. 327—332; the effect of their report defeated by his calling them together before the diviſion of the term, M. i. 55 and 56. ii. 325; a grace propoſed for their reconſideration of the queſtion paſſed the caput, but rejected in the ſenate, ii. 328—333.

Cornwallis, archbiſhop, "ſhort account of theological lectures" addreſſed to him, i. 16; a letter addreſſed to him, iii. 57—61; another letter, ib. 83—90.

Corporeal frame, its functions, ii. 145 and 146.

Craven, Mr. elected profeſſor of arabic at Cambridge, M. i. 27 and 28.

Deiſt, definition of, iii. 253 and 254.

Delegates of a ſtate freely choſen poſſeſs the ſovereign power, ii. 469 and 470, and 507 and 508, again 486, note: ſee Deputies.

Deputies, meeting of, at St. Alban's tavern, and agreement to a memorial, M. i. 149 and 150; meeting of other delegates at Guildhall, and their agreement to a petition to the houſe of commons, and Dr. J.'s letter to ſir Robert Bernard thereon; ib. 160 and 161.

Diſſenters, definition of, iii. 256 and 257.

Divinity act, kept by Mr. J. M. i. 28 and 29; his theſis, ii. 181—202.

Dragonetti, cited, ii. 256.

Dublin univerſity, Mr. J. admitted there M. i. 2; have eſtabliſhed quarterly examinations, ib. 2 and 3. ii. 299.

Education, defect in the preſent mode, as it reſpects theological ſtudies, i. 44—56; remarks upon the preſent mode of, in the univerſity of Cambridge, ii. 253—308.

good will, any ſubſydye totheir prynce, becauſe the comons thereof be ſo poer, as thay may not gyve any thing of their own goods. And the kyng ther, aſkyth never ſubſydye of his nobles, for drede that if he chargyd them ſo, thay would confedre with the comons, and peraventure putt hym downe; but our comons be riche, and therfor thay gave to their kyng, at ſum tymys quinſimes and diſmes, and often tymys other grete ſubſydyes, as he hath nede of their goods for the defence of his realme. How grete a ſubſydye was it, whan this realme gave to their kyng, a quinſime and diſme quinquinall, and the nynth flees of their wolls, and the nynth ſcheff of their graynys, for the terme of five yers. This might thay not have done, if they had ben empoveryſhyd by their kyng, as the comons of Fraunce; nor ſuch a graunte hath byn made by any realme of chriſtyndome, of which any cronycle makyth mention. Nor non other realme may, or hath cauſe to do ſo. For thay have not ſo mich fredom in their own goods, nor be entreatyd by ſo favourable lawys as we be, except a fewe regyons before ſpecyfyed. Item,

we ſee dayly, hou men that have loſt their goods, and be fallyn into povertie, becomyn anon robbers and theſes, which would not have be ſuch, yf povertie had not brought them thereto. How many a theſe than wer like to be in this land, if al the comons were poer. The gretteſt ſewertie truly, and alſo the moſt honour that may come to the kyng is, that his realme be riche in every aſtate; for nothyng may make his people to ariſe, but lacke of goods, or lacke of juſtyce. But yet certeynly, whan thay lack goods thay will ariſe, ſayyng thay lack juſtyce. Nevertheleſs if thay be not poer, thay will never aryſe, but if their prince ſo leve juſtice, that he gyve hymſelf al to tyrannye."

that each diviſion comprehend a certain number of pariſhes: and, moreover, that each diſtrict receive its denomination from the pariſh containing the greateſt number of electors.

III. That the election of repreſentatives to ſerve in parliament be held annually through England and Wales, upon the firſt tueſday in July: that the election commence between the hours of eight and eleven, and be finally cloſed before ſun-ſet of the ſame day.

IV. That all the male inhabitants of this country (aliens, minors, criminals, and inſane perſons excepted) be admitted to vote at the election of repreſentatives, ſubject only to the forms, proviſions, and regulations ſpecified in this report.

V. That the number of repreſentatives, returned by the inhabitants of each county of England and Wales, be ſettled for the term of ſeven years next enſuing, according to the following ſchedule, viz.

That the county of Rutland, and the two univerſities, return each two repreſentatives, -	2— 6
The counties of Huntingdon and Weſtmoreland, each three, -	3— 6
The county of Bedford, five, -	5— 5
Berkſhire, Cumberland, Herefordſhire, each ſix, -	6—18
Bucks, Cambridgeſhire with Ely, Hertfordſhire, Dorſet, Nottinghamſhire, Oxfordſhire, each ſeven, - - - -	7—42
Leiceſterſhire, - - -	8— 8
Suſſex, Warwickſhire, Worceſterſhire, each nine, -	9—27
Cheſhire, Cornwall, Derbyſhire, Northamptonſhire, Salop, Staffordſhire, each ten, -	10—60
Hampſhire, Wilts, each eleven, -	11—22
Glouceſterſhire, thirteen, -	13—13
Eſſex, Surry with Southwark, each ſixteen, - -	16—32
Lincolnſhire, ſeventeen, -	17—17
Kent, Lancaſhire, Somerſet, Suffolk, each eighteen, -	18—72
Durham biſhoprick with Northumberland, Devon, each twenty-one, - - -	21—42
Norfolk, twenty-two, - -	22—22
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Middleſex with London and Weſtminſter, forty-five, -	45—45
Yorkſhire, forty-ſix. - -	46—46
Total	513

VI. That an exact roll be kept of the male inhabitants competent to vote in each parish, continued down to the first tuesday in June; and that no person be permitted to give his suffrage, whose name is not found in that roll. That this roll be delivered in upon oath of the clergyman, churchwardens, or other officers of the parish, to the churchwardens of that parish of the district where the poll is taken.

VII. That the sheriff, together with all the justices of the peace, mayor, aldermen, and magistrates, form in each county a grand inquest, for allotting the districts in due proportion to the male inhabitants competent to vote, and for denominating the same: and that such inquest be finally settled, and notice of the allotment given to each parish comprehended in the district, within the term of ten days after the first tuesday in June.

VIII. That the election of the representatives of the people be made at the principal town or village of the district.

IX. That the poll of each district be taken by ballot, under the conduct of the church-

wardens of the pariſh in the diſtrict where the election is made.

X. The churchwardens of the diſtrict, at the cloſe of the poll, ſhall declare the name of the perſon elected, and certify the ſame to the ſheriff, in order to its being tranſmitted to the clerk of the crown in chancery.

XI. That the annual ſeſſion of parliament ſhall commence upon the firſt thurſday in November, unleſs ſome extraordinary event, or urgent national buſineſs, ſhould make it indiſputably requiſite for the crown to aſſemble it before the ſtated period.

XII. That the ſeſſion terminate upon the laſt day of April, unleſs the national buſineſs ſhould be ſooner diſpatched; the crown, nevertheleſs, having power to prolong the ſeſſion beyond the ſtated period, if any urgent buſineſs remain unfiniſhed; in which caſe, the parliament may continue its ſitting to the firſt tueſday in July.

XIII. That all members of the commons' houſe of parliament, before taking their ſeats, declare upon oath, that they do not hold any office or emolument at the will of the crown,

crown, or its ſervants, or any lord of parliament; that they will give due attendance to buſineſs, and act with all fidelity to the people in the diſcharge of their important truſt.

XIV. That all members ſerving in parliament be entitled to reaſonable wages, according to the wholeſome practice of ancient times.

XV. That all election cauſes be finally decided by jury before the judges of aſſize.

XVI. That every perſon competent to give his ſuffrage as an elector, be alſo eſteemed qualified to be elected to ſerve his country in parliament.

Signed, by order of the ſub-committee,

T. BRAND HOLLIS, Chairman.

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2. That the preſent inequality in the repreſentation in a great meaſure originates in an arbitrary exerciſe of the royal prerogative, whereby, in oppoſition to the cleareſt principles of the conſtitution, the crown preſumed to authoriſe, at pleaſure, certain incorporated bodies to ſend members to the commons' houſe of parliament; the unſuſpecting people of this country, at the ſame time, not attending to the inequality, that from thence muſt neceſſarily take place in the repreſentation, to the ſubſtantial injury of themſelves, and every ſucceeding generation.

That in conſequence of the decay of many of theſe corporations, and through the partiality of the crown, in various periods of our hiſtory, to its own tenants and dependants, there is at this time a degree of repreſentation enjoyed by many boroughs of this kingdom, far exceeding the bounds of due proportion, and too dangerous to the public freedom to be longer endured.

3. That more than ſeventy acts of parliament have been paſſed ſince the firſt invaſion of the liberties of engliſhmen, in the reign of Henry VI. for the purpoſe of regulating elections; that tumults and diſorders, bribery, perjury, and falſe returns, with a long train of other attendant evils, have been multiplied, in proportion as the acts were multiplied, which, under pretence of removing theſe evils, have, in fact, perpetuated them, and, at the ſame time, have aboliſhed, and almoſt obliterated, the remembrance of the univerſal right of ſuffrage, which forms one of the moſt important franchiſes of the engliſh people.

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